



General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 August 2013

Original: English

Sixty-eighth session

Item 15 of the provisional agenda*

Culture of peace

Letter dated 22 August 2013 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, has submitted to me the sixth annual report on the Alliance of Civilizations highlighting the main activities carried out by the Alliance from July 2012 to June 2013 in accordance with the third implementation plan (2011-2013) and the addendum thereto, as well as his own emerging ideas for the coming year and beyond.

As you know, the Alliance of Civilizations was established in 2005 under the auspices of the United Nations, at the initiative of the Governments of Spain and Turkey. Its activities are focused on helping to counter polarization and extremism by promoting tolerance and cultural diversity within and among societies, with the intent to contribute to preventing identity-based conflicts.

As the Alliance has entered its first leadership transition with a change of High Representative, it has entered a time of self-evaluation that will lead to greater focus in its activities. The need for the work of the Alliance is as great as ever. However, the High Representative is of the view that there also is a need to determine whether the current array of projects is appropriate for the evolving challenges we face, since we confront situations where innovative proposals are needed. He notes the ability of the Alliance to engage with official entities while continuing to build its linkages to civil society as an important skill. He also notes the importance of intercultural and interreligious dialogue processes as conflict prevention vehicles.

I am pleased to learn that more Member States are joining the Group of Friends of the Alliance. I congratulate the new members and encourage all to support the Alliance to the fullest extent possible, including through contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund. Only through predictable and sufficient infusions of unrestricted contributions to the Trust Fund can the Alliance continue and grow its operations.

I am grateful to the Government of Austria for its great support in hosting and organizing the 2013 Global Forum in Vienna in February 2013, under the theme

* [A/68/150](#).



“Responsible leadership in diversity and dialogue”, bringing together 1,200 participants, including more than 800 civil society representatives. I was particularly pleased to participate, including in an energizing session with representatives of youth from around the world. The Government of Indonesia has kindly offered to host the next Global Forum in late 2014, and preparations have already commenced.

I take this opportunity to reiterate my gratitude to the first High Representative for the Alliance, Jorge Sampaio, for his remarkable dedication in making the Alliance a reality on the basis of the 2006 report of the High-level Group, which remains the founding document for this initiative. Over nearly six years, he gained notable political support for the Alliance, built widespread links with civil society, and initiated projects in the four priority areas established in the report of the High-level Group, thus laying a firm foundation for further progress. We are indebted to him for his achievements.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present report to the attention of the General Assembly.

(Signed) **BAN** Ki-moon

Alliance of Civilizations: sixth annual report of the High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations

Summary

The present report highlights the main activities carried out by the High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations and the secretariat from July 2012 to June 2013. These activities were developed in accordance with the third implementation plan for 2011-2013 submitted to the Secretary-General in August 2011 as well as the Addendum, thereto, taking stock of the outcomes of the Fifth Global Forum, held in Vienna in February 2013.

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	4
II. Overview of progress	4
III. Consolidating the Alliance of Civilizations as a global multi-stakeholder platform	6
IV. Main programme initiatives and activities	10
A. Education field of action	10
B. Media field of action	12
C. Migration field of action	13
D. Youth field of action	13
E. Innovation, campaigns and special events	15
F. Other activities	17
V. Fifth Global Forum	17
VI. Outreach and communications	19
VII. Governance: Trust Fund and staffing	19
VIII. Conclusion	20
Annex	
Alliance of Civilizations communication: online outreach	22

I. Introduction

1. The Alliance of Civilizations, a political initiative of the Secretary-General, was launched in 2005 with the co-sponsorship of the Prime Ministers of Spain and Turkey. Jorge Sampaio, the former President of Portugal, was appointed as the first High Representative for the Alliance in May 2007. During his tenure, Mr. Sampaio developed a functional framework for action, an initial agenda for activities and a network of stakeholders.

2. In the middle of the reporting period, in March 2013, a major leadership transition took place: the new High Representative, Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly and former Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations, was designated by the Secretary-General.

3. The core of the Alliance's work is defined by activities designed to promote tolerance and respect among human beings for their diverse beliefs, cultures and other sources of identity. Our globally shared aspiration for a culture of peace among all civilizations is central to the work of the Alliance. The Alliance pursues this goal through efforts to enhance the impact of civil society and by linking the work of the latter to the official activities of the United Nations.

4. As in previous years, the Alliance continues to occupy its special place within the United Nations system. It is a key platform in the larger structure of the United Nations that actively works with civil society. The Alliance operates in partnership with Member States, international organizations, media, young people and other civil society representatives. During the reporting period, the Alliance staff continued project-based activities while planning and presenting the Vienna Forum in partnership with the Government of Austria.

5. This is the High Representative's sixth annual report to the Secretary-General. It highlights the main activities during the past year (July 2012 to June 2013). Specifically, it covers the last six months of the tenure of the former High Representative, who completed his mandate in February 2013, as well as new directions for organization, planning and implementation that can be expected with the appointment of the new High Representative.

II. Overview of progress

6. Since its inception, the Alliance has become a leading United Nations platform for intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation. It has connected Governments, lawmakers, local authorities, civil society organizations, the media and individuals devoted to promoting understanding across diverse communities. Through its resolution [64/14](#), the General Assembly expressed its support for the Alliance and acknowledged it as such a platform.

7. Jorge Sampaio, High Representative from 2007 through February 2013, established a network of supporters among Member States, international and regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, foundations, youth, faith-led organizations and the private sector. These relationships were often strengthened through memorandums of understanding; those that have been completed provide the backbone for the Alliance's networks.

8. The Alliance has the support of the majority of Member States and several international organizations in its Group of Friends, which currently has 138 members. It boasts programming in the areas of media, youth, education and migration. Some programmes engage more than one area. The Alliance's current range of activities can be placed into three broad categories: national and regional strategies, programmes, and special projects and events.

9. From August 2012 to January 2013, progress was made in a number of areas: new ideas for a second generation of national plans were developed and presented at the annual meeting of the focal points; initial action plans for Southeast Europe and the Mediterranean were evaluated and their second editions were prepared; the initial first regional strategy for Latin America was discussed and endorsed among partners; the second regional consultation for Asia and the South Pacific was organized; and preparatory discussions on the framework for the Africa region consultations were held.

10. Various programmes were further developed and consolidated during the past 12 months: activities in the areas of education and youth (fellowship programme, summer schools, PLURAL+ and the Media and Information Literacy Initiative) expanded and received recognition from the international community; this also applies to the Global Expert Finder project in the media field and to multi-stakeholder initiative, such as the Youth Solidarity Fund, the Intercultural Innovation Award and training events organized through media and migration programmes.

11. The first six months covered by the present report were marked by a number of challenging events for the Alliance, namely those triggered by a provocative film denigrating Islam which sparked violent protests in several parts of the world and led to the killings in Benghazi, Libya, in September 2012. The need for bold collective action to oppose extremism, intolerance and advocacy of religious hatred in a more effective and coordinated way with other partners was once again stressed by the High Representative. Mr. Sampaio worked in close consultation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to launch the Rabat Plan of Action, presented in Geneva in February 2013. Moreover, during this crisis, the Alliance launched a global Twitter campaign for citizens around the world.

12. At the instruction of High Representative Al-Nasser, the strategic review was conducted from March to June 2013. This led to the preparation of a strategy for 2013-2018, building on the successes from 2007-2012 and identifying in broad terms the concepts that should define future planning for the Alliance. The following six priority areas were identified by the High Representative:

- (a) Building on previous achievements and moving further to accomplish additional goals in the areas of youth, education, media and migration;
- (b) Strengthening partnerships and cooperation in the multilateral system;
- (c) Adding complementary concepts and tools to the conflict prevention and reconciliation efforts of the United Nations;
- (d) Exploring links among relevant Alliance project activities and post-2015 development planning;
- (e) Strengthening the financing and structure of the Alliance;

(f) Increasing the Alliance's interaction with media, civil society and the business sector.

13. Based on High-Representative Al-Nasser's new vision, the future of the Alliance must be characterized by further consolidation and coherence. Project development and all related activities will be more tightly controlled and subject to a rigorous and disciplined process of vetting, implementation, completion and evaluation.

14. With respect to funding, a major effort was made in 2012 to reinforce the Voluntary Trust Fund with a replenishment mechanism aimed at increasing the predictability of resource mobilization efforts and diversifying donors. The outcomes of the first replenishment session (held in Istanbul, Turkey, in May and June 2012), with pledges amounting to \$7.5 million, were considered very promising. However, owing to a leadership transition initiated in September 2012, the second replenishment session, held in February 2013, resulted in only a few new pledges (\$1.5 million). The full implementation of the replenishment mechanism will be an ongoing challenge for the Alliance, which the new High Representative has committed to address.

III. Consolidating the Alliance of Civilizations as a global multi-stakeholder platform

Group of Friends and focal points

15. In the course of six years, the membership of the Alliance's Group of Friends rose to 138 members (114 countries and 24 international organizations). The Group of Friends met twice at the Permanent Representative level, in February and May 2013 in New York. The ministerial-level meetings were held in New York in September 2012 and in Vienna in the context of the Fifth Global Forum, in February 2013. The Vienna Group of Friends meeting was marked by the adoption by consensus of the Vienna Declaration on the Alliance of Civilizations. The latter was an important new development, as the Group of Friends had never before reached consensus on such a broad-ranging document at a Global Forum meeting.

16. The members of the Group of Friends continue to provide guidance on key issues and strategic directions of the Alliance through bilateral consultations and group discussions. They have been actively involved in providing inputs to the strategic review process, conducted from March to June 2013, and will be invited by the High Representative to support the implementation phase of his strategic plan for the next five years. In April 2013, the High Representative sent a letter to all Member States of the General Assembly, that had not yet become members of the Group of Friends inviting them to consider joining it.

17. From August 2012 to January 2013, former High Representative Sampaio focused much of his attention and action on preparing the Alliance for a smooth leadership transition and on finalizing the implementation of the third implementation plan (2011-2013). He prepared a range of reports on the Alliance, based on his experience as High Representative, which were submitted to the Group of Friends in September 2012 and to the Alliance's focal points in December 2012. During this period, Mr. Sampaio held comprehensive political consultations with both sponsors and with key members of the Group of Friends, namely Indonesia,

with a view to securing a host for the sixth Global Forum. He paid official visits to Albania, China, Malaysia, Oman, Singapore and Tunisia. He launched and participated in the selection process of a new Director for the secretariat.

18. In February and March 2013, High Representative Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser held bilateral consultations with both sponsors and paid official visits to Spain and Turkey where he met, respectively, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain and the Prime Minister of Turkey. Additionally, while at the Vienna Forum and the Second World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, held in Baku, he held a number of meetings with various representatives and stakeholders of the Group of Friends, such as the Emir of Qatar, the President of Azerbaijan, the Speaker of the House of Kazakhstan and representatives of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the League of Arab States.

19. Members of the Group of Friends were invited to appoint focal points mandated to oversee the implementation of the Alliance's goals at the national level, notably through national plans, and coordinate with the secretariat. By 30 June 2013, 86 countries and 23 international organizations had appointed their focal points.

20. The Alliance ensured coordination of its efforts and exchanges by organizing the focal points' annual meeting in December 2012 in Tunis, hosted by the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization. Partners from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) were invited to present to the focal points some of their flagship programmes and tools that could be implemented at a country level within the Alliance's national plans. Focal points were also involved in various meetings focusing on the elaboration and adoption of the regional strategies for Latin America and the Black Sea region. Regular consultations among them were also informally developed on a regional basis.

National and regional strategies

21. National strategies reflect a commitment by countries to generate an internal process of ownership of the Alliance's goals. Specifically, they are a mechanism to exchange lessons learned regarding challenges of cultural diversity, including identity-based tensions. To date, 27 Member States have submitted national strategies. While they remain important expressions of commitment to the principles of the Alliance, the strategies are inconsistent in respect of their application. Some simply detail past achievements; others set aspirational goals; few mention any mechanism for implementation. Some contain dated information, with no process in place for annual revisions or updates. Addressing these challenges and grounding the plans in concrete actions is something only Member States can do at their own initiative.

22. An important step forward was made at the focal points' meeting in Tunisia, which focused on the evaluation and re-energizing of the current national plans as key policy tools to address divides, promote intercultural dialogue and contribute to build inclusive and tolerant multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-religious societies. A template for a common structure of future national plans was presented, and a number of future common actions to be included and developed by all countries were discussed.

23. The Alliance has also called upon groups of countries facing shared challenges to generate common actions in cooperation with civil society through the creation of regional strategies. They have continued to gain traction, as more Member States express interest in regional coordinating mechanisms, while regional multilateral organizations, such as the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation, are increasingly taking the lead in their respective areas:

(a) In October 2012, a regional meeting for the Mediterranean strategy was hosted by Spain. It focused on the evaluation of the first action plan and on the content of the second action plan for 2013-2015;

(b) In November 2012, regional consultations on strategy for the Asia-Pacific region were held in Shanghai, China, bringing together more than 150 participants representing Governments, academia, corporations, non-governmental organizations and cultural organizations. This event was organized with the United Nations Association of China in partnership with Fudan University, the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, the Centre for Dialogue, La Trobe University (Australia) and the International Movement for a Just World (Malaysia);

(c) In December 2012, a regional meeting was held in Tunisia for Southeast European country focal points to discuss the second action plan for the region;

(d) Following a process initiated in Peru in 2012, several consultations were held with the Latin America group in order to reach an agreement on the draft strategy and finalize the text. The final preparatory meeting was held in New York in February 2013;

(e) Following the consultative processes, a regional strategy has been drafted for the Black Sea region. New strategies are planned for Africa, the Middle East and, possibly, Central Asia.

24. Both national and regional strategies retain their importance as evidence of commitment to the values of the Alliance; in the case of regional strategies, they represent shared commitments across borders. They are an important part of the legacy of the Alliance's early years. In that regard, the Alliance staff need to continue to develop cost-efficient ways to track their progress.

Public-private partnerships

25. Enhancing intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity is the responsibility of all, not just Governments. As the Alliance report *Doing Business in a Multicultural World: Challenges and Opportunities* demonstrated, the private sector has longstanding and successful experience to share on this matter. In that regard, the Alliance is collaborating increasingly with corporate partners, building on the successful partnership with the BMW Group.

26. The Alliance developed an awareness-raising campaign entitled "Do one thing for diversity and inclusion" in collaboration with Dell, Pfizer, Deloitte, Intuit, Johnson and Johnson, and Sodexo. The session on the role of the corporate sector in promoting cultural diversity, held during the Global Forum in Vienna in February 2013, was organized by the Vivendi Group.

27. The Alliance is currently developing a new partnership with EF Education First, a global leader in the field of language teaching and student exchanges, through which the 2013 summer school will be organized in August.

28. The Alliance established a partnership with Google to co-organize a digital training course in Tunisia (November 2012) and in Jordan (April 2013) on web tools for gathering and reporting across cultures, in both cases convening 25 journalists and social media editors from various countries in the Middle East and North Africa region.

International organizations and memorandums of understanding

29. One important element of the Alliance's work methods is the development of a network of supportive partners, many of which are multilateral organizations. To date, memorandums of understanding have been signed with 18 international or multilateral organizations.¹

30. In 2012 and 2013, memorandums of understanding were negotiated with the African Union and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, and signed at the Vienna Global Forum in February 2013. Over the past several months, discussions have continued with the Organization of American States.

Strengthening links within the United Nations system

31. An identified need for greater policy coherence has surfaced after five years of reporting to the General Assembly. Collaboration between the Alliance staff and the rest of the United Nations Secretariat, particularly among the operative departments or significant elements of the specialized agencies, has developed (for example, the Alliance is a permanent member of the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development), but not sufficiently.

32. In 2013, a heightened effort to improve those linkages was initiated, benefiting from the new High Representative's operation from New York. Meetings with the Department of Political Affairs (especially the Policy and Mediation Division), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (especially the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery) and the United Nations Policy, Planning and Application Branch of the Peacebuilding Support Office have already been undertaken and expressions of interest for joint programming have been explored.

33. Through an invitation from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Government of the Philippines, the representative of the Alliance, the Chef de Cabinet, went on mission to Mindanao, Philippines, to assess the humanitarian situation as well as relevant aspects of the peace process.

¹ Agreements and memorandums of understanding have been signed with the African Union, Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization, European Union, Council of Europe, Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, Ibero-American General Secretariat, International Labour Organization, International Organization of la Francophonie, International Organization for Migration, Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture, Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Latin Union, League of Arab States, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, United Cities and Local Governments, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Partners Assembly

34. As part of the new replenishment mechanism, a Partners Assembly was set up to diversify the funding base among Member States, international organizations, foundations, corporations and individuals. On 28 February 2013, the Partners Assembly met as a follow-up to the inaugural session held in 2012. It brought together over 100 participants representing Governments, international organizations, civil society and the private sector, who made a series of pledges and shared views on the future priorities and course of action for the Alliance.

35. During the session, a memorandum of understanding and a letter of intent were concluded with the African Union, the Global Movement of Moderates Foundation, EF Education First and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean. Voluntary pledges were made in support of the Alliance's core budget and projects (namely, the fellowship programme, summer schools and the Youth Solidarity Fund). In addition, a number of in-kind services and commitments to action were announced (regional strategies, Sixth Global Forum in Indonesia).

Civil society network

36. The Alliance of Civilizations is systematically developing its programmes and projects in collaboration with civil society partners and meetings with the High Representative are being held on a regular basis. In particular, in February 2013, the High Representative held a special event with up to 80 representatives of civil society at the closure of the Vienna Forum. In May 2013, he invited media and civil society to attend and contribute to the discussions at the Group of Friends meeting.

37. From 17 to 21 April 2013, the Alliance's representative took part in a conference of Syrian religious leaders, with a view to exploring the possibility of establishing an interreligious/interfaith council in Syria that could, following the current conflict, act to limit violence among groups. The event was organized by the Alliance's partner, Religions for Peace, in Istanbul, Turkey.

38. The Global Dialogue Foundation developed the first Alliance civil society chapter in Australia, aiming to facilitate connections and synergies, advance the Alliance's goals, and advocate for intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and inclusion. In May 2013, at the Second World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, held in Baku, the High Representative met with up to 25 civil society organizations from around the world, which expressed interest in replicating the Global Dialogue Foundation's model.

IV. Main programme initiatives and activities**A. Education field of action****Media and Information Literacy Initiative**

39. The Alliance's Media and Information Literacy Initiative comprises three main elements. The web-based clearinghouse and the University Network on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue were both developed in partnership with UNESCO. The clearinghouse was consulted by 14,935 unique visitors and has become the thematic platform on media and information literacy within the United Nations.

40. The University Network on Media and Information Literacy has continued to grow; the original eight universities have developed their own regional networks, thereby fulfilling the aim of creating a network of networks for media and information literacy-related resources and initiatives. The University Network had its second global conference, hosted by Cairo University, Egypt, in April 2013, at which the Network's first publication, published with support from the Nordic Information Centre for Media and Communication Research, was presented.

41. The third element of the Media and Information Literacy Initiative is providing expertise and support to media and information literacy-related conferences. From July 2012 to June 2013, the Alliance participated in two media and information literacy conferences in China, one in Toronto, Canada, one in Doha, and one in Abuja.

Clearinghouses (Research and Education About Religions and Beliefs)

42. The Alliance's "Education About Religions and Beliefs" web-based clearinghouse has continued to develop. During the reporting period, 6,367 unique visitors used this resource and the network of partners has continued to grow: to date, there are 25 active partners that support research on themes relating to education about religions and beliefs. The main activity of the Education About Religions and Beliefs network was the publication by the Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace of the outcomes from the international symposium on Religion, Spirituality and Education for Human Flourishing. The Alliance's work on the Education About Religions and Beliefs clearinghouse and intercultural dialogue was presented at a series of conferences in Chile, organized by the local Education About Religions and Beliefs partner, Alfonso Ibáñez University.

Fellowship programme

43. In autumn 2012, the Alliance organized two exchange sessions for 24 fellows. The session for the Middle East and North Africa region was held in Egypt, Morocco and the United Arab Emirates for a period of two weeks, during which 40 organizations were visited. Twelve fellows from Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America took part. Following that, 12 fellows from Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia, travelled to the United States and Europe (Belgium, France and Germany), visiting close to 50 organizations.

44. In June 2013, the Alliance ran a two-week programme for 12 fellows from Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and the State of Palestine, who visited the United States and organizations based in Berlin, Brussels and Paris.

45. The Alliance created a network of fellowship programme alumni (2010, 2011 and 2012 editions, which at the end of 2012 represented 85 participants) and facilitates online exchanges through a dedicated website, blogs and social media. The alumni meeting was held in Baku in May 2013, with a view to providing an opportunity for fellows to meet in person, discuss their experiences and contribution as advocates for dialogue and understanding between the Western and Muslim worlds, and agree on the creation of a loose but vibrant network of committed emerging leaders. The meeting resulted in many recommendations and ideas for follow-up projects to be led by fellows.

46. The programme is actively supported by such partners as the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, the League of Arab States, the British Council, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Qatar Committee for the Alliance of Civilizations, the Institute of International Education, the Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Through a communications plan, its activities generate growing press and media coverage, with articles published in *El Mundo*, *Huffington Post*, *El País*, *Le Devoir*, *Arab News*, *Kuwait Times*, *Le Soir*, *Metropolis*, InterPress Service and Bronx TV. The number of fans' "likes" on Facebook grew to 3,077 (+185.97 per cent), allowing the fellowship programme to potentially reach 2,016,963 friends of fans.

B. Media field of action

Media training events on digital tools for newsgathering and reporting across cultures

47. During the reporting period, the Alliance, in partnership with Google and the World Bank Institute, developed a series of media training courses entitled "Digital tools for newsgathering and reporting across cultures". These courses teach journalists how to communicate with their audience appropriately via social media and develop strategies to improve their online information gathering and processing skills. After a pilot in Tunis in November 2012, a major course was organized at the Jordan Media Institute in Amman in April 2013. The course included 25 participants and high-level experts in social media and cross-cultural understanding.

Global data journalism project

48. The Alliance facilitates studies regarding how the media covers cross-culturally sensitive issues pertinent in today's news. Featured through innovative data visualizations (data presented through state-of-the-art infographics), the results of these studies shed light on media practices and coverage of a given issue. In partnership with the European Journalism Centre, five academic institutions (King's University College, Deutsche Welle Akademie, Missouri School of Journalism, Christelijke Hogeschool Ede and Institut National de l'Audiovisuel) and funded by Open Society Foundations, the Alliance launched a data journalism project to study how the media covers migration. The researchers analysed the coverage of migration in the context of national elections and presented their quantitative findings at the Fifth Global Forum in Vienna.

Global Experts

49. Global Experts (see www.theglobalexperts.org), an online database of experts, has continued to be a resource available to journalists. While a significant number of media requests are received on a daily basis for experts' commentary, the number of original articles generated for the site has decreased owing to reduced human resources capacity in the secretariat. A strategic review is under way to explore various options on how to best manage the database with the currently limited capacity. The database will also undergo a revision to narrow down experts' fields of work to those pertaining to cross-cultural crises and conflicts. This will make the resource as relevant as possible to the Alliance's mandate and will benefit the organization in all fields of activity, deploying experts when necessary.

C. Migration field of action

Migration and media joint training events

50. In Paris in January 2013, the Alliance's media and migration programmes, in partnership with the Global Editors Network and with the support of the Gulbenkian Foundation, held a high-level seminar convening 35 editors-in-chief, journalists and media and migration experts from Europe and the Mediterranean (representing 27 countries) to discuss challenges, best practices and opportunities in media coverage of migration. The seminar led to the development of 17 recommendations for media, which were then disseminated internationally.

51. In May 2013, a Swiss edition of the above-mentioned seminar was held to tackle similar issues at the national level. The Bern seminar convened journalists, editors and experts in the field of migration, including presenters from IOM, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Panos Paris Institute.

52. In an effort to continue the discussion on how to best cover migration in the media, the Alliance launched the “#coveringmigration” social media campaign, which will run throughout summer 2013, on media practices in covering migrant and migration-related stories. It will generate discussions and raise the following questions to be addressed by the media representatives: What are the best practices? What helps journalists to establish context? What resources are available for help? What work is still needed? Findings of this campaign will be presented in the next annual report.

D. Youth field of action

Youth Solidarity Fund

53. In January 2013, with funding provided by the Governments of Australia, Finland and Spain, the third edition of the Youth Solidarity Fund was launched. Through the Fund, the Alliance provides technical support to youth-led organizations and awards youth projects that contribute to fostering mutual respect, understanding and long-term positive relationships among peoples of different cultures and religions. The 2013 call for applications covered 67 developing countries in the Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and Middle East and North Africa regions.

54. A total of 581 applications were received from youth organizations registered in 52 countries. They were screened and evaluated by the Alliance and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), in consultation with representatives of six youth organizations from Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa (selected through a call for nominations, advertised among all Alliance youth partners) and a representative of UNDP.

55. Following the selection process, 17 youth proposals from Bangladesh, Cape Verde, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, India, Israel, Kenya, Lebanon, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Uganda were chosen as finalists. Organizations entered a negotiations phase with UNOPS to be awarded contracts (grant of \$25,000 per project) with the expectation that all project activities would be completed by 31 December 2013.

56. As part of the technical support provided to the youth organizations, in June 2013, the Alliance organized a five-day capacity-building training event for the 2013 Youth Solidarity Fund finalists, in an effort to strengthen their skills in the areas of project management, communications, fundraising, project sustainability, monitoring and evaluation, financial and narrative reporting and team-work. The training event was held in Casablanca, Morocco, and organized in partnership with the Governments of Morocco and Sweden.

Young Euro-Med entrepreneurs in interculturality

57. The Alliance partnered with Fondazione CRT and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy to launch a pilot project entitled “Young Euro-Med entrepreneurs in interculturality”. This project gathered 20 young social entrepreneurs from the Euro-Mediterranean region who aspire to create positive social change in their communities by reducing tensions linked to cultural and religious diversity, while also generating employment. The project includes three main components: (a) a week-long training event tackling both conflict prevention and business management; (b) a six-month period of mentoring by experts in the field; and (c) an online platform for exchanges with peers and potential partners.

58. The training for the pilot phase took place in Torino, Italy, from 11 to 15 February 2013. This was followed by the beginning of the mentoring period, which will last until September 2013. The Alliance and its partners are currently working on transforming this pilot project into an incubator for social enterprises with a mission to bring social entrepreneurship and economic empowerment to marginalized communities around the Mediterranean region.

Summer schools

59. With grants provided by Brazil, Malta, the Gulbenkian Foundation, the Abdul Aziz Al-Babtain Foundation and two private companies, Mota-Engil and the André Jordan Group, the Alliance organized two summer schools in 2012.

60. The summer school entitled “Bridging hearts, opening minds, and doing things together”, was held in Coimbra, Portugal, from 4 to 11 August 2012. As in previous years, it was a multi-stakeholder initiative in partnership with the League of Arab States, the University of Coimbra and the Aga Khan Development Network. A total of 135 young people, representing 69 countries gathered in Coimbra. Most of them represented youth-led organizations, while some were students, bloggers or public servants with significant experience in international youth and project work. The summer school aimed to empower young people by strengthening their skills and knowledge so that they can be more closely involved in cooperative actions across divides. The participants explored various themes linked to the Alliance’s work, such as religion and politics, conflict prevention and resolution, facilitating dialogue, and media and information literacy.

61. From 3 to 7 September 2012, a special “Guido de Marco Alliance Summer School” took place in Valletta, organized in partnership with the University of Malta and the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies. It brought together 35 young people from the region and focused on “Building Peace around the Mediterranean”. The course was designed as a process of mutual learning; it provided some theoretical and practical knowledge, while participants used their own background to

compare their approaches to youth work and discuss their experience in dealing with conflict transformation.

62. For the 2013 summer school to be held in Tarrytown, United States, from 24 to 31 August, the Alliance is partnering with the company EF Education First. A total of 100 young people were selected to have discussions and take part in workshops on topics such as urgent global challenges: from xenophobia to extremism; negotiation for peacebuilding and cooperation; human rights; and using social media for massive social change.

E. Innovation, campaigns and special events

Intercultural Innovation Award

63. In 2011, the Alliance and the BMW Group launched the “BMW Group Award for Intercultural Innovation, in support of the Alliance of Civilizations, under the auspices of the United Nations” (otherwise known as the Intercultural Innovation Award). This Award is given to innovative and sustainable projects around the world that encourage dialogue and cooperation among people from different cultural backgrounds using innovative and creative methods. Winners become members of the World Intercultural Facility for Innovation, a programme initiated by the Alliance in cooperation with the BMW Group that helps winners to become more efficient and to expand their projects, and transfer them to other contexts where they might be relevant. The Alliance and the BMW Group have renewed their partnership through the end of 2013.

64. The Alliance and the BMW Group mobilized financial and organizational resources to support 10 winners of the 2011 Award. It was noted that one year after winning the Award, 7 out of 10 organizations consolidated their work and considerably expanded their operations. The total number of project beneficiaries increased from 72,210 to 141,569 by the end of 2012 (96 per cent growth). Also, projects were replicated in 49 cities and regions, increasing the number of benefited communities from 35 to 84 by the end of 2012 (240 per cent growth).

65. In addition to a total prize pool of \$50,000, winners were supported through various means by the Alliance, the BMW Group and a group of mentors. The mentorship group is composed of foundations, institutions, Governments and corporations that provide funding or in-kind contributions to one or more of the winners of the Award. In some instances, mentors support a winner in their overall effort to expand and replicate throughout the entire year; in others, this support is provided intermittently. Financial mentors included the European Commission and TD Bank, and pro bono mentors included the World Tourism Organization, the International Student Identity Card Association and the Daniels Corporation. Numerous individual mentors provided their time and skills, mainly by translating documents pro bono (a total of 200 hours).

66. In autumn 2012, a new application process was launched. A total of 530 applications were received from 98 countries (77 per cent increase from 2011). Applications were assessed by an international jury of experts and results were presented at the Fifth Global Forum in Vienna.

PLURAL+ youth video festival

67. Over 160 entries from 63 countries from around the world sent their videos to the PLURAL+ 2012 youth video festival on migration, diversity and social inclusion. Twenty-five videos were selected by the international jury and PLURAL+ partner organizations (currently, 33 partners are actively involved with the initiative). The selected videos were presented at the awards ceremony at the Paley Centre for Media (December 2012) and have since been distributed in a variety of platforms across the world, including broadcasts in Latin America and Italy and screenings in Austria, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Cuba, Egypt, France, India, Italy, Qatar, Serbia, Spain and the United States.

68. It has been estimated that through television broadcasts, Internet and public screenings, PLURAL+ videos were viewed by over 20,000 people (to this should be added the broadcast impact of the UN in Action segment that UNTV produced about PLURAL+). The pluralplus.unaoc.org website received 19,272 unique visitors during the reporting period.

69. The PLURAL+ festival was the co-organizer of a symposium on “Youth-produced media and education”, held in partnership with Teachers College at Columbia University in April 2013.

“Create Alliance of Civilizations apps/games for intercultural dialogue challenge” initiative

70. In 2012, the Alliance, in partnership with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Education Arcade and Learning Games Network, launched the initiative “Create Alliance of Civilizations apps/games for intercultural dialogue challenge”. Over 70 proposals from across the world responded to the call. Five winners and five honourable mentions were selected by an international jury. The awarded entries came from Canada, India, Israel, Italy, Kenya, New Zealand, Spain and the United States. With the support of the initiative’s outreach partners, the winning apps/games are now available for download. In addition, the initiative drew the attention of media outlets, facilitating further outreach of these apps/games, which take intercultural dialogue as their frame of reference.

“Do one thing for diversity and inclusion” campaign

71. In 2013, the “Do one thing for diversity and inclusion” campaign (the social media component of the World Day for Diversity and Inclusion, observed on 21 May) was held. For 2013, Intuit provided an updated and more colourful logo and 110 partners from 40 different countries (international and regional organizations, the corporate sector and civil society organizations) joined the campaign. Partners included Sodexo, Deloitte, Televisión América Latina, the British Council, the French Institute Alliance Française, the Vivendi Group, the World Bank, EF Education First, Columbia University, Akili Dada, Amara and the Global Dialogue Foundation.

72. As part of the 2013 edition of the campaign, 90 events were held in 24 different countries, including a slogan and video contest run through Facebook. During the reporting period, the campaign’s Facebook page likes grew to 14,448 (from 8,011) and 308,000 people (20 times more than the previous year) were reached through posts, which have the potential to be seen by 7,895,512 friends of

fans of the page. On Twitter, the campaign used the hashtag #DoOneThing and from 1 to 30 May 2013, a total of 2,800 tweets were generated by 1,900 contributors, which had a reach of 4.4 million people (who potentially saw those tweets).

“Represent yourself” campaign

73. In the wake of the YouTube trailer for the film *Innocence of Muslims*, on 14 September 2012, the Alliance launched a social media campaign on Twitter using the hashtag #RepresentYourself. The goal of the campaign was to provide a channel for conversation that could counteract efforts by extremists. The campaign also sought to draw attention to the large numbers of peaceful protestors in the wake of the attacks on the United States Embassy and the killing of the United States Ambassador. The “Represent yourself” campaign reached 3.2 million people on Twitter and over 1,200 people on Facebook.

F. Other activities

Promoting global conversation: network of Dialogue Cafés

74. During the reporting period, the Dialogue Cafés project, led by an independent non-governmental organization in partnership with Cisco, the Gulbenkian Foundation and other local partners, was further developed. This was done following a two-tier priority strategy: enlarging the network in the Middle East and North Africa region and in Portuguese-speaking countries; further developing the programming towards long-term actions in four main fields: intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation; social innovation; entrepreneurship in particular for young people and women; and knowledge.

75. In the past 12 months, new Dialogue Cafés have opened in Ramallah; Beirut; Florence, Italy; Northampton, United Kingdom; and London. Additional Cafés are set to open soon in Angola, Brazil (second Café), Finland, Kenya and Mozambique. Others are in the pipeline and due to open in 2014 in Canada, Jordan, Mozambique, Tunisia and the United States. As part of the Dialogue Café project, a summer school will be held in August 2013, in Washington, D.C., focusing on a wide range of global issues, including intercultural dialogue, tolerance, peacebuilding and reconciliation for targeted groups.

76. The Alliance was a major partner in the organization of the second edition of the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, held in Baku in May 2013. Dedicated to the theme “Living together peacefully in a diverse world”, the high-level Forum brought together close to 600 participants from around the world and up to 30 Ministers of Culture and Tourism, as well as the Heads of the Alliance, UNESCO and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

V. Fifth Global Forum

77. The Fifth Global Forum was held in Vienna on 27 and 28 February 2013 under the theme “Responsible leadership in dialogue and diversity”, and convened over 1,200 participants from over 100 countries of the world. Heads of State, ministers, leaders of intergovernmental organizations, members of the corporate sector, academics, philanthropists, young people and members of the media discussed how

responsible leadership can make a difference in the following three major issues: (a) promotion, protection and full enjoyment of the right to religious freedom in a context of religious pluralism; (b) media pluralism and diversity of media content and their contribution to fostering public debate, democracy and awareness of diverse opinions; (c) shaping a new narrative for migration, integration and mobility in the global economy.

78. The Vienna Forum marked the transition of leadership within the Alliance, as Jorge Sampaio was succeeded by Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, former President of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly and former Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations. As part of the transition process, Mr. Sampaio prepared a booklet on his experience as High Representative, entitled “2007-2013: A Journey Across the Alliance of Civilizations”, distributed at the Forum.

79. In the context of the Vienna Forum, in order to build cross-cultural journalistic skills, the Alliance, in partnership with Canal France International and the Missouri School of Journalism, provided an opportunity to journalists from various parts of the world to write articles and produce videos about the Forum. Journalists worked on the content together and learned from peers as well as experienced trainers.

80. In order to facilitate an online conversation on Twitter, the Alliance reached out to civil society partners and enlisted a team of young participants to live-tweet from the sessions and workshops at the Vienna Forum. Discussions evolved around such themes as youth leadership, the role of Governments in promoting pluralism and addressing diversity issues; democracy versus protection of minorities; the importance of economic development work in addressing global peacebuilding; the responsibility of the media in social inclusion; the role of religious leaders in pluralism; and the role of women in religious movements and pluralism. This conversation reached over 3.5 million individual Twitter accounts from nearly 3,700 individual tweets that were produced by over 1,100 accounts using the hashtag #unaoc2013.

81. A total of 150 young people from 100 countries convened at the Forum’s youth event. They represented national youth councils, youth-led non-governmental organizations and youth networks, while a number of them were students. After a full day of discussions and exchanges about the Forum’s theme, young participants made a series of recommendations to world leaders and all other Forum participants.

82. A number of major outcomes and initiatives were announced at the Forum. The most important political outcome was the Vienna Declaration, a document affirming the commitment of numerous Governments and international organizations from around the world to advancing cross-cultural dialogue. Beyond the Vienna Declaration, a number of cross-cutting initiatives in the four main areas of work of the Alliance — youth, media, migration and education — were announced. This included new grants under the Youth Solidarity Fund, the roll-out of an alumni programme for the fellowship programme, a new competition to create apps and games for intercultural dialogue, and the results of a data journalism project analysing media coverage of migration.

VI. Outreach and communications

83. The Alliance's outreach and communications efforts are run primarily through the projects and initiatives it implements in different parts of the world. The Alliance has become more focused on telling the stories of the beneficiaries of its work, whether they be winners of the Intercultural Innovation Award and the Youth Solidarity Fund, members of the fellowship programme, or journalists and editors who took part in Alliance media training events. The Alliance sees such approaches as a way to highlight its work, while offering an additional profile-raising service to those it helps through the various programmes. Beyond this, there are various other modalities for direct communications with and outreach to the Alliance's key constituencies. Methods include press releases, newsletters and media alerts to journalists. All Group of Friends meetings became open to the media and are regularly broadcast live on the United Nations webcast.

84. The Forum is the premier global cross-cultural event and is held every 12 to 18 months. While it elicited wider international coverage in the Alliance's early years, in recent times, hometown coverage has been strong, while international coverage has been sparse.

85. Seeking more visibility for the Alliance, the High Representative reaches out to the various media outlets within the United Nations system and externally. On 14 March 2013, he held a well-attended press conference at Headquarters, which included journalists accredited to the United Nations Correspondents Association. Additionally, the High Representative had a number of one-on-one interviews with UNTV and Radio and various media outlets in Austria, Azerbaijan, Kuwait, Qatar, and Turkey. A series of media events targeting United States media is planned for September 2013 after the opening of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

86. The Alliance has recently become more active in its outreach efforts on social media through specific campaigns, such as a campaign following the Benghazi attacks on United States State Department personnel (which resulted in a 78.3 per cent increase in visitors to the main website during seven days of the campaign) or a campaign on improving coverage of migration.

87. Through social media, traffic from Facebook increased by 87.83 per cent to 23,422 visits and traffic from Twitter rose by 241.73 per cent to 3,988 visits. The Alliance's main Twitter account grew 124 per cent, and its main Facebook page had a 243 per cent increase in fans' likes.

88. The Alliance's main website, www.unaoc.org, remains a vehicle for raising its visibility. In the course of the reporting year, traffic to the website grew to 271,291 visits (126.87 per cent increase) from 169,110 unique visitors (130.61 per cent increase).

VII. Governance: Trust Fund and staffing

89. In spite of the Alliance's role and expanded activities, the resources at its disposal continued to be significantly limited compared with the target level, erratic and almost impossible to predict. Increasingly over the years, non-earmarked (core operations) funding has continued to trend downwards, whereas earmarked (project-

based) funding has increased. The reduction in non-earmarked funds results in an inability to plan or think strategically or engage in exploratory efforts to identify new activities, and leaves the Alliance in a reactive posture dependent on the immediate, sometimes fleeting, interests of individual donors.

90. For the 2012 budgetary year, actual expenditures were kept under \$3.8 million. Over \$1.5 million was pledged by the donors (direct contributions) in 2013.

91. In February 2013, the Director of the Alliance secretariat was appointed. The Director was tasked to oversee the completion of a strategic review of the organization and develop a long-term plan for its activities. He was also tasked to mainstream the efforts of the Alliance's staff into the work of the United Nations Secretariat to ensure greater substantive linkages.

92. Similarly to 2012, a deep imbalance persisted between the set of tasks or programmes and the human resources of the Alliance secretariat. To address the issue and support the initiative, the High Representative brought on board his Chef de Cabinet, three senior advisers and a spokesperson. Also, together with the Director, he will revise the current organizational set-up and redistribute staff following the strategic review process (to be completed in September 2013).

93. In March 2013, Guidelines for Office Operations were promulgated by the High Representative and reviewed by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. The final version was published in June 2013.

VIII. Conclusion

94. The past year has been characterized by continuing project-related activities, many of which were highly successful, transition to the new leadership, and a strategic review of the Alliance's activities with a view towards planning for the future.

95. The strategic review revealed that the Alliance's structures and processes needed to be retooled. Too many ad hoc relationships had developed over time and too few well-established lines of authority had been constructed. Given the small size of the staff, opportunities for joint operations needed to grow, and this effort has already begun in earnest. There was also a need to explore opportunities to partner with other departments in the Secretariat or within the specialized agencies.

96. A process was developed and a plan put into place to collect data, develop ideas and then draft the strategic review and plan. This included consultative meetings with members of the Group of Friends. It also included a rigorous process of written input from Alliance staff, one-on-one interviews with them and a staff retreat for collective input through facilitated discussions.

97. A separate facilitated meeting was held with a number of representatives from the Group of Friends to obtain their input regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the Alliance's activities in the past. They also identified areas of concern for the organization and ideas for future programming. Other interested individuals from civil society, including young people and representatives of philanthropic foundations, were also contacted for their insights.

98. The strategic review and plan for 2013-2018 was prepared using the collected input, along with the guidance of the High Representative regarding his vision,

priorities and operational guidance. It clearly enunciated the High Representative's intent that the Alliance continue to operate using the High-level Group report as its primary guidance, but with the intent that its project activities relating to youth, education, media and migration be oriented more directly towards efforts that lead to a more peaceful and more cohesive world.

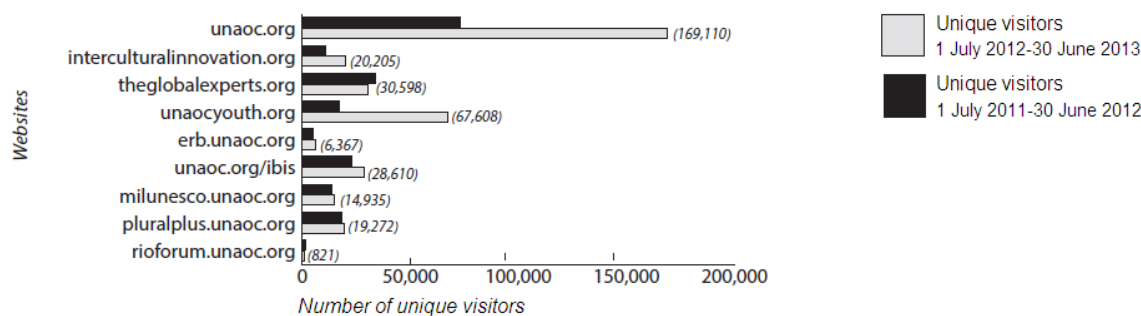
99. The review also revealed that an organizational reform is needed. Increased discipline, focus and coherence will be required for long-term institutional survival. Programme management processes will be put into place, including effective monitoring and assessment.

100. Efforts must be redoubled to increase the support of Member States for the Trust Fund, while more attention will be paid to developing relationships with the private sector and the philanthropic community.

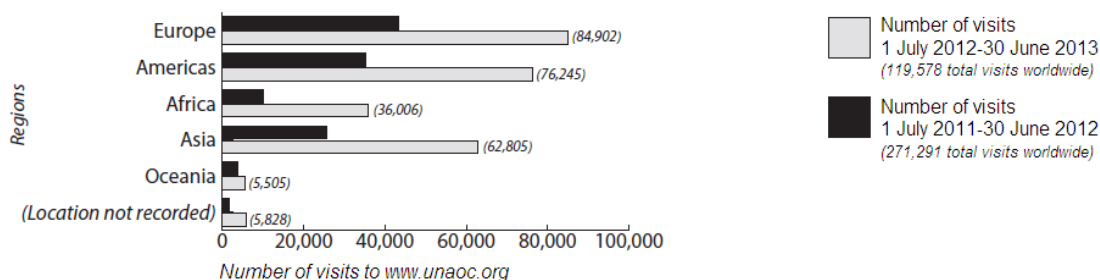
Annex

Alliance of Civilizations communication: online outreach

Unique visitors to all of the Alliance of Civilizations websites



Visits by region to the unaoc.org website



Traffic to all Alliance unaoc websites from social media (Facebook and Twitter)

