

International Government Communication Forum “Citizens for Prosperity”
20-21 March 2016, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

– UNAOC Workshop 1 –
Prevention of Violent Extremism and Hate Speech:
Sharing Good Practices in the Use of Social Media

More than three billion people today connect to the Internet globally, and almost 68% of them are active on social networks, representing 28% of the world population. In the United States alone, almost three-quarters of adults use social networking sites, and more than half of Facebook and Twitter users get their news through those sites.

With the number of users constantly growing, social networks have become a target for the spread of hate speech and extremist propaganda. Never before in history have people been able to propagate incendiary speech in such effective way. As history has shown, rhetorical excesses can give rise to a climate of prejudice, discrimination and violence, and creative measures are needed to counter hate speech globally.

In keeping with its mission to promote dialogue between cultures, civilizations, faiths, and peoples, and in accordance with the United Nations Secretary-General’s recent Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) has worked actively with the global media space, academics, tech companies and experts, particularly those who are well positioned to report, comment on, and investigate xenophobia, hate speech, violent extremism and prejudice.

The workshop will provide participants with a more complete and nuanced understanding of hate speech, discuss underlying reasons behind the surge in hate speech and cyberextremism incidents, and present ways to counter hate speech and help prevent Violent Extremism through good practices in the use of Social Media.

Participants are invited to participate in the conversation online, using: @UNAOC and #SpreadNoHate.

Speakers:

- Ms. **Nihal Saad**, Chief of Cabinet & Spokesperson for the High-Representative of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations
- Mr. **Thibault Chareton**, Project Management Specialist – Media and Migration, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

– UNAOC Workshop 2 –
The impact of UNAOC Programmes
Involving Youth in the Promotion of Tolerance and Diversity across the World

Through its programmes and initiatives UNAOC acts as a premier global platform for intercultural dialogue and the promotion of inclusiveness and diversity. It develops its actions at both governmental and civil society levels to overcome prejudice, misperceptions and polarization and to counter forces that fuel polarization and extremism.

This workshop aims at presenting the impact UNAOC programmes have on the involvement of youth from around the world in the global effort to prevent radicalization and xenophobia at grass-roots level. By facilitating the global conversation on diversity, UNAOC programmes help promote change in policy frameworks, prevent identity-based tensions, support grass-roots initiatives, raise awareness and mobilize public support for tolerance and inclusion.

Along with Education, Media and Migration, Youth is one of UNAOC main pillars of action and young people are considered key agents for social change, economic growth, and innovation. Such acknowledgment is in line with the UN Resolution 2250, unanimously adopted by the Security Council in December 2015, which urges Member States to increase youth representation in decision-making at all levels and which recognizes the crucial role of young people in peace building and global stability.

UNAOC invests in outstanding youth leaders and initiatives that promote intercultural understanding and positive social action for the development of peaceful and inclusive societies. For each of its programmes, UNAOC implements a selection process that ensures cultural diversity and gender balance.

UNAOC also seeks to engage further with former participants to its programmes by encouraging these emerging leaders to share resources and ideas on ways to develop dialogue and cooperation between their societies, cultures and religions. Today, the UNAOC Alumni network is a global pool of young experts and professionals with a first-hand knowledge of their country's social context and cultural diversity. Within their community, they are leading the implementation of innovative strategies for the promotion of tolerance and the engagement of youth, both offline and online, on important social issues.

Speakers:

- Mr. **Alessandro Girola**, Programming Coordinator, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations
- Ms. **Paloma Haschke-Joseph**, Project Management Specialist - Intercultural Engagement, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations