



UNAOC
United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

NEWS FLASH 📅 Volume 14
#OneHumanity amid COVID-19

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United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

730 Third Avenue, 20th Floor,
New York, New York 10017

☎ Phone: +1-929-274-6217

📠 Fax: +1-929-274-6233

✉ Email: contactaoc@unops.org

The High Representative Makes an Official Visit to the Russian Federation

(18 January to 22 January)



Mr. Moratinos with H.E. Mr. Sergey Lavrov,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



Mr. Moratinos with H.E. Mr. Sergey Vershinin,
Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation



Mr. Moratinos with H.E. Ms. Valentina Matviyenko,
Speaker of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly



Mr. Moratinos with H.E. Mr. Konstantin Kosachev,
Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee

During his official visit to the Russian Federation, Mr. Miguel Moratinos, High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, met with Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Sergey Lavrov and Deputy Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Sergey Vershinin. Discussions focused on the work of UNAOC and avenues of collaboration, especially in the area of strengthening interfaith dialogue and harmony across the faith spectrum. Additionally, Mr. Moratinos was received by H.E. Ms. Valentina Matviyenko, Speaker of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, and H.E. Mr. Konstantin Kosachev, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee at Russia's Federation Council, to discuss the preparation of the 2022 World Conference on Interfaith and Interethnic Dialogue.



Mr. Moratinos also met with Mr. Farit Mukhametshin, Deputy Chairman of the Group of Strategic Vision "Russia – Islamic World" and Ambassador at Large Mr. Konstantin Shuvalov. Topics discussed included possible synergies with the work of UNAOC and the root causes of xenophobia and discrimination based on religion or belief. Moreover, Mr. Moratinos met with Metropolitan Hilarion, Chairman of the Department of External Church Relations of the Patriarchate of Moscow, as well as members of the Interreligious Council of Russia.

While in Moscow, Mr. Moratinos gave interviews to **Sputnik News Agency** and **Russia Today** to discuss his commitment to achieving UNAOC's goals in strengthening and promoting interfaith and intercultural dialogue. As his final engagement, Mr. Moratinos sat with ice hockey legend and UN Environment Programme (UNEP) National Goodwill Ambassador **Mr. Viacheslav Fetisov** in his weekly news show "**Fetisov**". They spoke about global diplomacy, climate change, and living together as One Humanity.

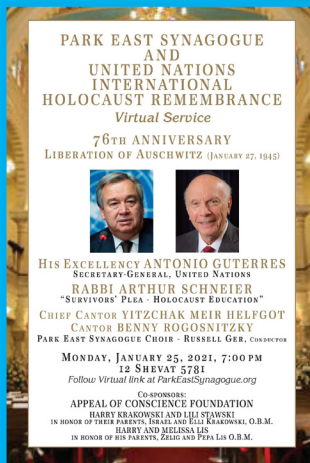


Check out Mr. Moratinos' interview with Sputnik News: bit.ly/3ka0JgQ



Check out Mr. Moratinos' interview with Mr. Fetisov: bit.ly/2ZF83aN

VIRTUAL EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

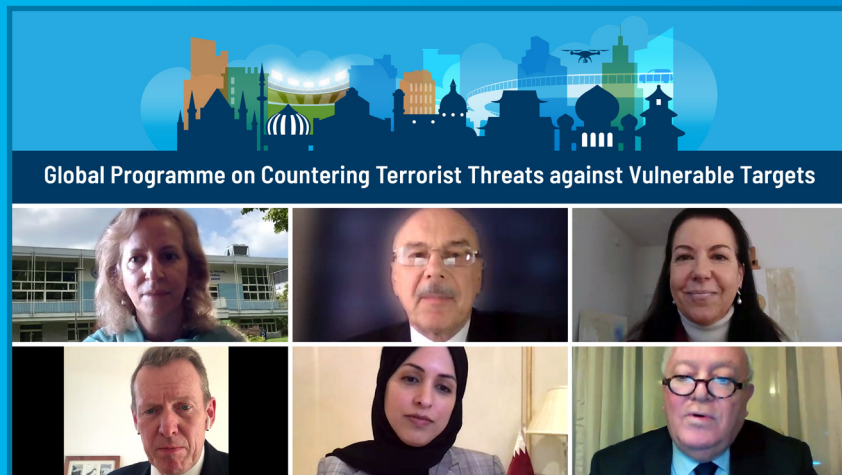


To mark the 76th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp, Mr. Moratinos addressed the **UN International Holocaust Remembrance Virtual Service** entitled "**Survivors' Plea – Holocaust Edition**", co-hosted by **Park East Synagogue in Manhattan**.

In his remarks, Mr. Moratinos stated: "To end antisemitism, we should combat all forms of hate, bigotry, and discrimination based on any religion or belief." (27 January)



Mr. Moratinos participated in a virtual event organized by B'nai B'rith International in observance of **International Holocaust Remembrance Day** entitled "**Lessons of the Holocaust – A UN perspective on Global Anti-Semitism**". In his statement as the UN focal point to monitor antisemitism, Mr. Moratinos stated: "Amid the pandemic, we witnessed a sharp rise in neo-Nazism and far-right extremism ideology spreading like wildfire. UNAOC will start mainstreaming awareness and education about antisemitism in the new iterations of its programs targeting youth. I plan to convene a meeting with major Jewish organizations, envoys on combatting antisemitism and relevant UN bodies to create synergies between relevant stakeholders". (27 January)



The High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), Mr. Miguel Moratinos, spoke at the launch of the **Global Programme on Countering Terrorist Threats Against Vulnerable Targets**, led by the **UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT)** in partnership with **UNAOC** and **UNICRI** and in consultation with **INTERPOL** and the **UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED)**. The launch featured discussions between senior UN officials, Member States and international organizations, policymakers, and security experts. The event included a high-level panel on the protection of religious sites, allowing speakers to share experiences and discuss good practices to develop collaborative approaches to protect religious sites and contribute to the operationalization of the UN Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites, developed by UNAOC. In his remarks, Mr. Moratinos stated: "UNAOC stands ready to work with partners in the Global Programme and Member States at their request to test recommendations contained in the UN Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites. The Global Programme constitutes an essential component of the implementation of the Plan." (19 January)



On behalf of the High Representative, **Ms. Nihal Saad, Chief of Cabinet and Spokesperson for UNAOC**, participated in the first **UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) Ambassadorial-Level Quarterly Briefing to Member States in 2021**, alongside representatives from the **UN Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC)**, the **UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED)**, and the **UN Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (UNOSAA)**. **UN Under-Secretary-General Mr. Vladimir Voronkov** chaired the briefing with over 200 participants and stressed the importance of a strong cooperation with Member States, regional organizations, civil society, and UN partners to counter terrorism.

Ms. Saad expressed UNAOC's commitment to implementing the UN Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites. She highlighted UNAOC's global call to action **#forSafeWorship**, launched to celebrate the universality of religious sites as symbols of our shared humanity, history, and traditions and mobilize young people to share multimedia stories about their personal connections to religious sites. (28 January)

In the context of the implementation of the **"Global Pledge for Action by Religious Actors and Faith-Based Organizations to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic in Collaboration with the United Nations"**, an initiative co-led by the **UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)**, the **UN Office on Genocide Prevention and Responsibility to Protect (OSAPG)**, and the **Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**, a webinar on **"The Role of Faith Actors in Countering Hate Speech within Covid-19"** took place on 28 January. The meeting gathered representatives from religious and faith-based organizations, civil society and human rights organizations. The event helped collect concrete recommendations on building a safer, fairer, and more inclusive world where no one is left behind. (28 January)



PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS



www.forSafeWorship.org

UNAOC's global call to action **#forSafeWorship** to safeguard religious sites and worshipers worldwide is still ongoing! This new UNAOC communications campaign works to engage the global community in taking concrete actions to contribute to implementing the UN Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites, developed by UNAOC. To date, UNAOC has received and featured multimedia stories from young people in Afghanistan, Bahrain, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, France, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Nepal, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, the United States, and more! In addition, the campaign has reached 315,000 people on social media.

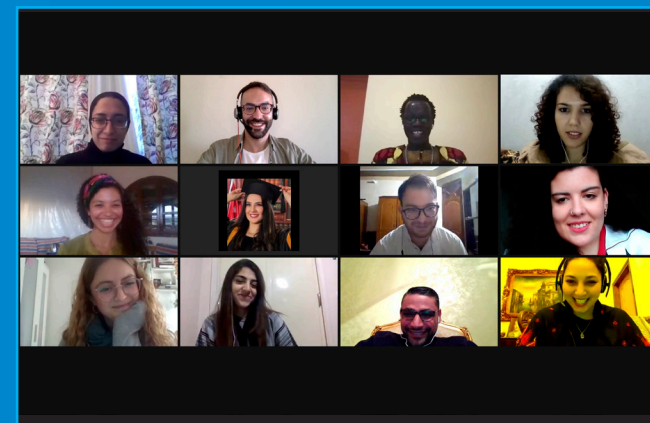
For more information and to submit your story, visit forsafeworship.org, and follow the account **@forSafeWorship** and the hashtag **#forSafeWorship** on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram!



The first **Online Youth Consultation on PVE through Sport** brought together **50 young leaders** from **38 countries** and **five continents** with diverse experiences in sport, peacebuilding, and/or PVE, alongside National Focal Points (NFPs) on PVE nominated by 20 Member States within the framework of the UN Global Programme. The forum gathered the inputs and contributions of the youth in developing outputs that advance the role of sport in PVE and recommendations on ways to further promote youth leadership in key decision and policy-making processes. (20-21 January)



UNAOC has received a record number of applications for the ninth edition of its **Youth Solidarity Fund** with **over 1,400 youth-led organizations from more than 70 different countries** so far. The diversity is equally reflected in the projects' creative approaches to promote intercultural and interfaith dialogue. In order to allow more time for organizations to apply, UNAOC has extended the deadline to 7 February 2021.



As a part of the fourth edition of its **Young Peacebuilders programme**, UNAOC, with the generous support of AEXCID (Agencia Extremeña de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo), organized the last three sessions of its "Sunnyside" Workshop. After completing their training, participants from the Middle East and North Africa enjoyed a cultural night during which each of them shared the most unique elements of their cultures. The twenty young peacebuilders will now start the implementation of their respective community-based projects. (1, 15, and 26 January)



As a part of the second phase of the **#YouthWagingPeace: The Whole Community Approach to PVE** programme, UN-ESCO MGIEP and UNAOC launched a call for young South Asian researchers on the prevention of violent extremism to join the team of young authors that is leading the drafting of the State of PVE in South Asia Youth-led Report. Youth contributors can apply and submit their stories until 7 February.