



*A call for calm and peace  
in the Holy Land*

PRESS STATEMENT

Read the Press Statement here:

<https://bit.ly/2T2GUPa>

Mr. Moratinos issued a **call for calm and peace in the “Holy Land”**, noting that the deadly violence in the past few weeks that has persisted despite the ceasefire agreement has led to a spike in anti-Semitic attacks as well as manifestations of anti-Muslim hatred in many cities around the world. He noted that such alarming acts and racial expressions targeting people on account of their religions or beliefs are intolerable, and called for mutual respect and human solidarity to pave the way for a political solution. (26 May)

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The High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), Mr. Miguel Moratinos, briefed Member States at the second **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). In his remarks, Mr. Moratinos spoke about the **UN Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites**, developed by UNAOC and launched by the UN Secretary-General in 2019, as well as UNAOC’s campaign **#forSafeWorship**, which aims to mobilize the global community in sharing multimedia stories about their personal connections to religious sites. “As we broaden the scope of our collaboration with member states, which have the primary responsibility to protect religious sites, we are also seeing their growing support for the Plan of Action, especially in the context of promoting the sanctity of places of worship and ensuring the right of individuals to access religious sites and practice their rituals freely and safely,” he stated. (19 May)

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Mr. Moratinos met with the **Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations, H.E. Mr. Magzhan Ilyassov**, to discuss enhancing cooperation with UNAOC, especially in promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue, and building cohesive pluralistic societies. (18 May)



Read the Message here:

<https://bit.ly/358Lhel>

On the occasion of the **World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development**, Mr. Moratinos issued a statement. “Too often, global conflicts have a cultural dimension, and bridging the gap between cultures and peoples through intercultural dialogue is needed more than ever in our multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual world,” he stated. (21 May)

“*Bridging the gap between cultures and peoples through intercultural dialogue is needed more than ever in our multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual world.*”

**H.E. MIGUEL MORATINOS**

High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations



Mr. Moratinos delivered remarks at the **Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO)**’s International Conference on the Civilizational Values in the Prophet’s Seerah under the theme, “Towards a future vision for the Prophet’s Seerah”. In a video message, Mr. Moratinos emphasized UNAOC’s priority to fight discrimination, racism and xenophobia. “Mutual respect, interfaith harmony and peaceful co-existence are attainable when there is broad space for everyone to practice the rituals of their religions or beliefs freely and safely,” he stated. (26 May)



Mr. Moratinos issued a video message as part of the **UN virtual event** to commemorate **Vesak Day, “Healing the World: Prayers and Reflections for All Sentient Beings”**. “We can draw inspiration from Buddha’s timeless wisdom. Despite the hardships he faced, his core message was that of tolerance, empathy, and humanism,” he stated. (26 May)



Mr. Moratinos participated in the virtual **Dialogue with Human Rights and Civil Society Partners on Building a Better Paradigm to Prevent and Counter Terrorism**, organized by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations. “Civil society plays an influential role in setting and implementing development agendas throughout the world. Many have been at the forefront of advocating equity, inclusiveness, diversity and social justice rooted in human rights,” he stated. (26 May)



**Fifteen women mediators** from Mali and the Central African Republic participated in the discussion, and explored the socio-cultural challenges in the multidimensional crises in both countries, the role of religious and traditional leaders in this context, and tools to help participants be better equipped in their work. The meeting ended with a commitment for a roadmap for engagement and the future establishment of a network of women mediators in the region. (19 May)

UNAOC and Fundación Mujeres Por Africa held an interactive webinar on **“Women and Mediation in Intercultural and Interreligious Conflicts”** as part of their joint initiative, **Women’s Alliance for Peace**, to support the role of women as peace mediators and negotiators in conflicts with a sociocultural and religious dimension.



UNAOC, together with the UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect (UNOSAPG) and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, co-organized a virtual discussion entitled **“Moderation of the Religious Discourse: The nexus to promoting interfaith dialogue, mutual respect and understanding”** as part of a series of six sessions on implementing the **Global Pledge for Action by Religious Actors and Faith-Based Organizations to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic** in Collaboration with the United Nations. In his opening remarks, Mr. Moratinos stated, “Moderation is an important value and approach to countering violent extremism and hate speech and contributes to promoting dialogue, mutual respect and understanding. Enabling the voices of moderation particularly in the context of religious and cultural tensions contributes to fostering tolerance and paves the way towards more inclusive, cohesive and peaceful societies.” Panelist are participants in UNAOC’s joint initiative with the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism, the “EDIN” programme, which has brought together young religious leaders and media makers for training and collaboration towards building more inclusive societies. (27 May)

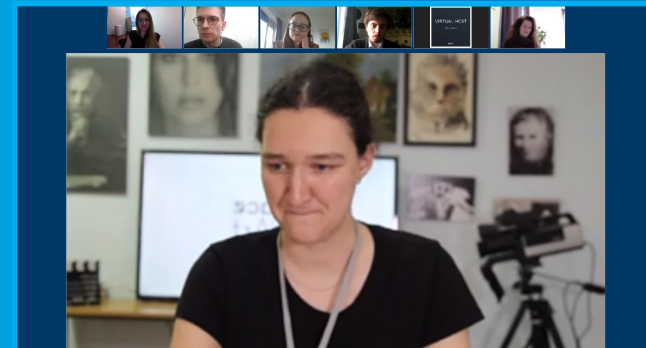
## PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS



UNAOC and BMW Group, with the support of Accenture, launched the call for applications of the new edition of the **Intercultural Innovation Award**. Eligible to apply are not-for-profit organizations worldwide implementing projects focused on promoting intercultural dialogue and fostering diverse and inclusive societies. The awardees will benefit from a one-year comprehensive capacity-building programme aimed at strengthening their skills and the scope of their projects and activities. They will receive financial support (USD 200,000 distributed evenly between the awardees) and customized support and mentoring. The deadline to apply is **Wednesday, 3 June at 5 PM EDT**. For more information, visit [interculturalinnovation.org](http://interculturalinnovation.org).



UNAOC, together with the UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) and the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), are looking for young game-changers! The organizations are launching a call for applications for the **#DigitalGamesForPeace challenge**, an initiative that aims to support young people in co-designing and co-creating games that will serve as pedagogical tools for transferring, enhancing, and developing skills and competencies for intercultural dialogue and social and emotional learning to prevent violent extremism. Youth who wish to apply must be between 18 and 35 years old, nationals of or based in select countries in South and Southeast Asia, and able to receive training in English. The deadline to apply is **7 June 2021**. For more information, visit [www.unaoc.org](http://www.unaoc.org).



Young peacebuilders, international donors and supporters of the UN Youth, Peace and Security Agenda came together at the **Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development 2021** to join a session entitled **“Unlocking the Potential in Youth-led Peacebuilding: Towards Real Partnership and Sustainable Resourcing”** jointly organized by UNAOC, Search for Common Ground and the United Network of Young Peacebuilders. Ms. Vera Al-Mawla from Lebanon, a recipient of UNAOC’s 2020 **Youth Solidarity Fund**, opened the session with reflections on her peacebuilding journey and on partnering with UNAOC. A highly interactive session brought to light challenges and possible solutions from diverse stakeholders. (5 May)



UNAOC and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are still accepting submissions for their joint initiative, the **PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival**.

Young filmmakers worldwide are invited to submit short films about migration, diversity, social inclusion, the prevention of xenophobia, and other pressing social issues. The deadline to submit a short film is **18 June**. To learn more, visit [pluralplus.unaoc.org](http://pluralplus.unaoc.org).



As part of their joint initiative **“News Generation Against Hate”**, UNAOC and the French Municipality of La Courneuve have carried on their activities throughout the month of May. The culturally and religiously diverse group of **forty youth aged 15 to 25** have continued developing their skills in fostering intercultural and interreligious dialogue and working on their media productions of alternative narratives to online hate speech and fake news. Youth participants also had the opportunity to meet in person with former boxing champion and writer Ms. Aya Cissoko to explore ways to overcome barriers related to inequalities, discrimination, and scarcity of resources to accomplish one’s goals.



UNAOC, together with the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) / UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT), concluded a series of capacity-building workshops for **20 young media makers, young religious leaders, and representatives of faith-based organizations** as part of Phase 3 of the **EDIN project**.

Participants started designing creative content for their social media campaigns, which they will launch on major social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, among others).