



UNAOC
United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

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As part of the UN system, we must work to meet the challenges we face with renewed determination based on the guidance provided by Member States in General Assembly Resolutions acknowledging the role of UNAOC and in line with the vision outlined in the Secretary-General's report on "Our Common Agenda."

H.E. MR. MIGUEL ÁNGEL MORATINOS

High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

UNAOC Convenes High-Level Meeting of the Group of Friends



The High Representative convened a hybrid ambassadorial meeting of the **UNAOC Group of Friends** at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The meeting was well attended by over 75 member states and 15 international organizations.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Moratinos briefed the membership on UNAOC's priorities to engage with faith actors and religious leaders **across the faith spectrum** within the framework of its mandate to advance interreligious dialogue and combat all forms of discrimination based on religion and belief; progress made on the implementation of his mandate as the UN focal point for monitoring antisemitism and enhancing a system-wide response; and **coordination and implementation of the UN Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites**.

The Group of Friends received updates on the UNAOC programming activities across 5 pillars and **new crosscutting projects** which were launched or completed within 2021. In 2022, UNAOC's priorities include **strengthening and reinforcing the prevention portfolio** both within and beyond the UN system; **bolstering engagement and interaction with member states and regional organizations to maintain the momentum**



on multilateral cooperation; expansion of the UNAOC's geographical presence and visibility and **contributing to the UN Secretary-General's priorities outlined in his report "Our Common Agenda"**.

Using the occasion, Mr. Moratinos welcomed the newest members - Andorra, Cote D'Ivoire, Cuba and The Muslim World League - to the Group, whose **membership reached 156**. (8 February)

UNAOC and UNOCT Hold Closing Event of EDIN (“Empowering Dialogue and Interfaith Networks”)



Mr. Moratinos and Mr. Voronkov with EDIN participants



Mr. Moratinos and Mr. Voronkov during the Opening Session, which was moderated by Ms. Anna Pavlyuchenko of UNAOC



The High Representative for UNAOC, **Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos**, and the UNOCT Under-Secretary-General, **Mr. Vladimir Voronkov**, celebrated the closing ceremony of their joint project **EDIN (“Empowering Dialogue and Interfaith Networks”)** during an in-person event, entitled **“Leveraging Interfaith networks for the Prevention of Hate Speech and Violent Extremism”**, in New York.

The event was attended by young people from Europe and the MENA region - young faith actors, religious and community leaders, and media makers - and marked the closing of the EDIN project, a pilot initiative jointly launched by UNOCT and UNAOC in January 2021. Project participants presented the outcome of the project’s peer-to-peer training sessions, pitched creative social media campaigns on interfaith harmony

to representatives of member states and faith-based organizations and exchanged views on good practices and lessons learned, in view of potential future iterations of the project. The event was attended by representatives of governments, faith-based organizations and United Nations officials.

“The campaigns implemented by EDIN participants take the social media users on a journey to peaceful coexistence and interfaith harmony. I am very pleased that today we are walking the talk. I thank you all because what you achieved is at the heart of the mission of UNAOC, subscribing to the motto “Many cultures. One humanity,” said Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos during the opening session. (17-18 February)

More information of the EDIN project, the participants and their campaigns is available at <https://edin.uncct.unaoc.org>



*Representatives of faith-based organizations, **Mr. Gopal Patel** of Bumi Global and **Mr. Thomas Keppen** of Religions for Peace, commented on EDIN participants’ campaigns*



***Ms. Nidaa Hussain Abu-ali**, Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations*



***Mr. Moratinos** and his Chief of Cabinet **Ms. Nihal Saad** meet with EDIN trainers and participants*

Behind the Scenes of EDIN Preparations for the Closing Event



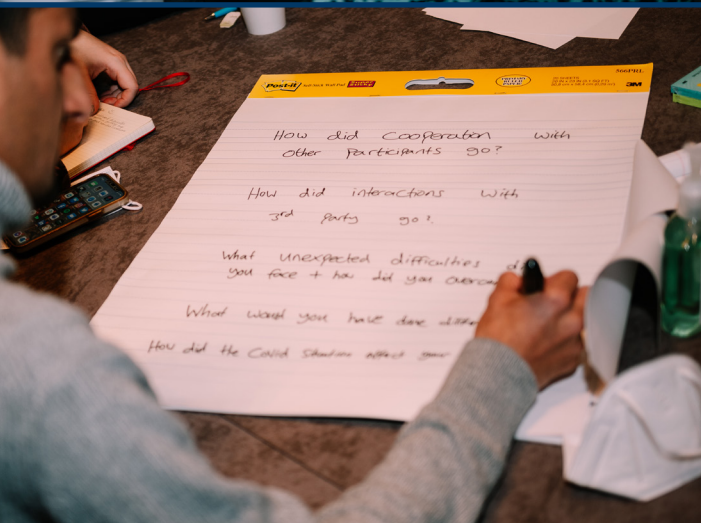
Mr. Moratinos and his Chief of Cabinet, Ms. Nihal Saad visited the venue on the eve of the closing event



The UNAOC team briefed EDIN participants at the onset of the 2-day event



Through a series of interactive workshops, EDIN participants shared their reflections and lessons learned from their peer-to-peer capacity-building activities





The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), in partnership with the **Permanent Missions of Egypt** and the **United Arab Emirates to the UN**, organized a high-level event in commemoration of the **International Day of Human Fraternity**.

The opening session of the virtual event featured the UN Secretary-General, **Mr. António**

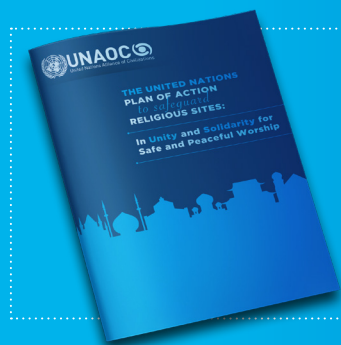
Guterres; the Permanent Representative of Egypt **H.E. Mr. Osama Abdelkhalek** and the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, **H.E. Mrs. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh**. The event was highly attended by more than 60 member states and numerous religious leaders and faith actors. Speakers included Secretary General of the Higher Committee of Human Fraternity, **H.E. Judge Mohammad Abdelsalam**; **Rabbi Arthur Schneier**, UNAOC Goodwill Ambassador and Founder and President of Appeal of Conscience Foundation; **H.E. Mr. Adama Dieng**, former United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide; **Dr. Azza Karam**, Secretary General of Religions for Peace, as well as interventions by the **Permanent Observer of the Holy See** and the Permanent Representatives of **Morocco, India, Bahrain** and **Saudi Arabia**.

In his remarks, the High Representative for UNAOC, Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos, stressed that the “**Document of Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together**” co-authored by **His Holiness Pope Francis**, and the **Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tayyeb**, sends a strong message of mutual respect, compassion and peace. He reiterated his commitment to implementing the Human Fraternity blueprint working closely with the committee, member states and relevant stakeholders. “In today’s spirit, let us renew our commitment to working together in solidarity to rebuild a better world where there are many cultures and one humanity,” Mr. Moratinos added.



It is to be noted that on 21 December 2020, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution **A/RES/75/200** proclaiming February 4 as the International Day of Human Fraternity to be observed annually. Celebrating human fraternity and the values it embodies such as mutual respect, diversity of cultures and religions, advancing intercultural and interreligious dialogue reminds us of the common values that we share as one humanity. This spirit is particularly needed at a time when many communities are divided across religious, ethnic and cultural lines. In this context, those humanistic principles are aligned with the goals and objectives of UNAOC, which was created to advance intercultural and interreligious dialogue as a viable tool to prevent and defuse identity-based tensions. Over the years, UNAOC has since provided a global platform for dialogue between faith actors across the faith spectrum emanating from a recognition that genuine dialogue bridges divides and overcomes prejudices, stigmatization, misperceptions, and polarization. (4 February)

HIGHLIGHTS



During the UNAOC Group of Friends Meeting, **Mr. Lars Bromley**, Head Analyst and Research Advisor of the United Nations Satellite Center (UNOSAT), presented a version in progress of the interactive map of religious sites in Argentina, one of the pilot countries participating in the wider mapping exercise recommended by the **United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites** developed by UNAOC. Maps of religious sites will capture the universality of religious sites and contribute to fostering respect and understanding of their significance for individuals and communities. (8 February)



Mr. Lars Bromley, Head Analyst and Research Advisor of UNOSAT



H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos addressed a conference at the **Cervantes Institute** in Madrid celebrating the 20th century Spanish female poet, **Pilar de Valderrama**. The High Representative highlighted the achievements of Pilar de Valderrama and her impact on Spanish literature. The event also featured other noteworthy guests, such as the famed poet **Carlos Aganzo** and **Alicia Viladomat**, granddaughter of Pilar de Valderrama. (23 February)



MEETINGS WITH SENIOR OFFICIALS



UN GA President
@UN_PGA

Had a good meeting with H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, High Representative for the @UNAOC.

The @UNAOC helps improve cross-cultural relations between diverse nations and communities.

Discussed the #OCA Report & the next edition of the Alliance's Global Forum.

Mr. Moratinos met with the President of the UN General Assembly, **H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid**. They discussed the importance of advancing the culture of peace, building bridges of understanding, and UNAOC's contribution to the implementation of Our Common Agenda. (17 February)



The High Representative for UNAOC, Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos, met with **H.E. Ms. Sima Bahous**, Director of General of UN Women. They discussed strengthening their joint work on preventive diplomacy through intercultural and interfaith dialogues, and their joint work on the promotion of women and youth in the peace and security agenda. (10 February)



The High Representative met with the **H.E. Ambassador Mrs. Maria Theofili**, the Permanent Representative of Greece. They discussed the importance of strengthening intercultural and interreligious dialogue and combating antisemitism. (31 January)



The High Representative met with **H.E. Mr. Maurizio Massari**, Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations. Mr. Massari reiterated, on behalf of Italy, his support for shared values and praised the work done by UNAOC to promote intercultural dialogue, understanding, cooperation and a culture of tolerance. (7 February)



The High Representative met with the **H.E. Ambassador Mr. Andreas Hadjichrysanthou**, Permanent Representative of Cyprus, who expressed his government's support for the work of UNAOC as well as the important role played by civil society (11 February)

Young Peacebuilders

IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

The 5th Edition of the UNAOC Young Peacebuilders programme is now open for applications

Apply by 15 March 2022

<https://apply.unaoc.org/young-peacebuilders>



A UNAOC initiative with the support of AEXCID



In collaboration with



Click here for more information: <https://bit.ly/3svYwlr>

The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) is pleased to launch the call for applications for the 2022 edition of **Young Peacebuilders**, taking place in **Latin America and the Caribbean**. The call is open to participants between **18 to 25 years old** from the region, with a strong interest in growing their ability to act as agents of peace in their community, region, and beyond, and to prevent violent extremism through intercultural and interfaith dialogue. Twenty young women and young men will be selected to participate in intercultural dialogue and peacebuilding experience. They will interact online, through a series of facilitated modules, and in person, during a one-week workshop. After completing the peace education training, participants will act as a force multiplier of the lessons learned through the programme and actively take part in follow-up activities at the community level. At the end of the project, participants are invited for a symposium to share their experience, achievements, and recommendations with a broader audience of practitioners, UN, policymakers, media, and civil society, bringing visibility to their initiatives towards the promotion of diversity and dialogue. **Deadline: 15 March 2022**



UNAOC, UNESCO-MGIEP, and UNOCT hosted a virtual showcase event for the **Digital Games for Peace Challenge**, featuring 4 unique games developed by **22 young gamechangers** over the past 8 months. The Digital Games for Peace Challenge aims to harness the creative energies of youth from South and Southeast Asia and the promise of game-based innovations in cultivating pertinent competencies for prevention of violent extremism. In this light, four groups of selected young leaders from the region presented their concepts and ideas for digital games to promote social and emotional learning to prevent violent extremism. Over 200 hundred people from the gaming industry, the education sector, and civil society organizations tuned in to an interactive discussion on **"Inclusion of Games in Education"** with experts in the field from all over the world. **Ms. Nihal Saad**, Chief of Cabinet of UNAOC, delivered remarks during the opening segment. (24 February)



In early February, **Ms. Zulaika Nanfuka**, 2020 Youth Solidarity Fund (YSF) recipient, participated in a roundtable discussion on **"The role of the UN: Fostering Interreligious Dialogue in Peacebuilding Efforts"**, hosted by **Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation** and the **Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers**. Zulaika highlighted her positive experience of working with UNAOC on interfaith projects through YSF and provided concrete recommendations for the UN system to improve their work with civil society in the field. "The UN should create dedicated platforms for knowledge exchange with youth-led faith-based organizations at global and country level to boost their capacity in faith-based programme design and management as general capacity in the basics of effective programme management is often lacking among many youth-led organizations," she said. (2 February)