

UNAOC Convenes High-Level Group of Friends Meeting on the Sidelines of #UNGA78



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Under-Secretary-General Miguel Ángel Moratinos, High Representative for United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), convened a high-level meeting of the **UNAOC Group of Friends** in New York City on the sidelines of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly. Mr. Moratinos briefed members of the UNAOC Group of Friends on the Alliance’s accomplishments from 2022 to 2023 and some of its priorities for the rest of 2023 and beyond.

Speaking at the opening session, **H.E. Mr. Dennis Francis**, President of the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, underscored how UNAOC is as critical as ever in finding new pathways to promote peace. “Let us work together to fight disinformation and hateful rhetoric,” he said.

The two co-sponsors of UNAOC, led by **H.E. Mr. José Manuel Albares Bueno**, Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Spain, and **H.E. Mr. Hakan Fidan**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye, reaffirmed their commitment to the Alliance and its mandate.

Mr. Moratinos acknowledged the continued support of the co-sponsors and thanked members of the Group of Friends for their contributions to the Alliance’s work as well as their guidance and strategic direction.

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H.E. Dennis Francis, President of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly



H.E. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for UNAOC



H.E. José Manuel Albares, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain



H.E. Mr. Hakan Fidan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Türkiye

UNAOC HIGH-LEVEL GROUP OF FRIENDS MEETING (continued)

As the gathering coincided with the International Day of Peace, the High Representative for UNAOC reminded the audience of the theme for Peace Day 2023, “Actions for Peace: Ambition for the Global Goals [which] recognizes our individual and collective responsibility to foster peace by translating words into action.” Peace Day, emphasized Mr. Moratinos, “embodies our shared aspiration to end conflict in all its forms and to safeguard the human rights of all people.”

Faced with today’s global challenges, he suggested those in attendance consider the question: “What does it take to have a paradigm shift from hate and intolerance to solidarity and compassion as a way of life?” He then made the case for a more robust multilateralism “to restore and revive universal humanistic values that are embedded in the UN Charter.”

Mr. Moratinos closed the event by looking ahead to the **10th Global Forum** in Portugal, where UNAOC will unveil a plan of action for the next five years. (21 September)



H.E. João Gomes Cravinho,
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Portuguese Republic



H.E. Jalil Abbas Jilani, Minister
of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic
Republic of Pakistan



H.E. Péter Szijjártó,
Minister for Foreign Affairs
and Trade of Hungary



H.E. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy
Prime Minister and Minister
for Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of Serbia



H.E. Sergei Aleinik, Minister
of Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of Belarus



H.E. Dato Erywan Pehin Yusof,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of
Brunei Darussalam



H.E. Maged Abdelaziz,
Ambassador, Permanent
Observer of the League of Arab
States to the UN



**H.E. Helga Maria
Schmid,** Secretary
General of OSCE



H.E. Kairat Umarov, First
Deputy Minister of Foreign
Affairs of Kazakhstan



H.E. Mohammad Sadegh Fazli,
Adviser to the Minister of Foreign
Affairs and Chief de Cabinet,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of
Islamic Republic of Iran



H.E. Charles C. Jose,
Undersecretary for Multilateral
Affairs and International Economic
Relations of the Philippines



H.E. Marin Chungong,
Secretary-General of the
Inter-Parliamentary Union



H.E. Omar Hilale, Permanent
Representative of the Kingdom
of Morocco to the UN



H.E. Dag Juhlin-Dannfelt,
Director General, Ministry of
Foreign Affairs of Sweden



H.E. Dr. Eduardo Jaramillo,
Director General for United
Nations, Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of Mexico



H.E. Mr. Oumarou Ganou,
Ambassador, Permanent
Representative of Burkina
Faso to the UN



Hon. Pedro Roque, President
Emeritus of the Parliamentary
Assembly of the Mediterranean



**Her Royal Highness Sheikha
Dr. Moza bint Tahnoun,** Counsellor,
Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of UAE



**H.E. Mohammad Ahmad
Alhammod,** Head of Specialized
Agencies and Other Organizations
Department, Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of Qatar



Sayit Yusuf, Deputy Secretary
General of International
Organization of Turkic Culture
TURKSOY



Jamal Sharifuddin Johan,
Undersecretary of the Multilateral
Political Division of the Ministry of
Foreign Affairs of Malaysia



H.E. Hedda Samson,
Ambassador, Deputy Head of
Delegation of the EU at the UN



H.E. Geng Shuang, Deputy
Permanent Representative
of China to the UN



**Wael Mahmoud Abdelaziz
Eldahshan,** First Secretary,
Permanent Mission of
Egypt to the UN



Viviane Rios Balbino, Minister
Counsellor, Permanent Mission
of Brazil to the UN



Suman Sonkar, First
Secretary, Permanent
Mission of India to the UN



Caka Alverdi Awal, Director
for International Security and
Disarmament, Ministry of
Foreign Affairs of Indonesia



Stepan Y. Kuzmenkov, Senior
Counsellor, Permanent Mission
of Russian Federation to the UN

The High Representative Holds Series of Bilateral Meetings during #UNGA78

On the sidelines of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the Under-Secretary-General, **H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos**, convened a spate of bilateral meetings to further collaboration to achieve common goals and interests. Topics of discussion included boosting confidence-building measures for durable peace; promoting intercultural, intercivilizational and interreligious dialogue; preventing polarization and radicalization; strengthening the role of women, youth and traditional religious leaders in peacebuilding efforts; and, advancing tolerance, trust, harmony and respect for diversity. Demonstrating UNAOC's commitment to dialogue, Mr. Moratinos met with ministers, and heads of delegations representing 35 Member States and international organizations. (21–26 September)



H.E. Hakan Fidan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye



H.E. Murat Nurtleu, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan



H.E. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia



H.E. Jalil Abbas Jilani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan



H.E. Zambry Abdul Kadir, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia



H.E. Tobias Billström, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden



H.E. Jean Asselborn, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg



H.E. Roberto Álvarez Gil, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic



H.E. Bakhtiyor Saidov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan



H.E. Jeyun Aziz Oglu Bayramov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan



H.E. Olivia Ragnagnhèwendé Rouamba, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Cooperation and Burkinabè Abroad of Burkina Faso



H.E. Sayyid Badr Bin Hamad Bin Hamood Albusaidi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman



H.E. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba



H.E. Hussein Brahim Taha, Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)



H.E. Ahmed About Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States



H.E. Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States of the Holy See



H.E. Vahe Gevorgyan, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia



H.E. Charles Jose, Undersecretary for Multilateral Affairs and International Economic Relations in the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines



H.E. Adel Al-Jubeir, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Climate Envoy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



H.E. Soltan Bin Saad Al-Muraikhi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar



H.E. Sultan Mohammed Al Shamsi, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for International Development Affairs of the United Arab Emirates



Mr. Nasser Al Kamel, Secretary-General of the Union of the Mediterranean



Mr. Ivan Ivanov, Chair of the Executive Board of the International Center Alliance of Civilizations



Venerable Dr. Sobhita, President of the International Buddhist Center

Nizami Ganjavi International Center’s High-Level Meeting on “Shaping the Future: Rebooting Multilateralism”

Mr. Moratinos, was a keynote speaker at the **Nizami Ganjavi International Center’s XXVI High-Level Meeting on “Shaping the Future: Rebooting Multilateralism”**, held at the Harvard Club in New York City, that brought together political leaders, scientists, and academics from around the world, as well as high-level officials from the UN.

Speaking at a panel session entitled **“Building an Alliance of Civilizations in an Age of Disruption”**, Mr. Moratinos emphasized “the value of listening to and learning from the wisdom of others” and called for a “globalization of solidarity and compassion”. He further remarked: “We are transitioning into a multipolar world... Multipolarity requires strong global governance and effective networked multilateral institutions. Equally we need to restore universal humanistic values that are embedded in the UN Charter.”

The High Representative also was the recipient of a Nizami Ganjavi International Award, presented at the event’s gala dinner, for his role in promoting cultural diversity, religious pluralism and mutual respect. (20–21 September)



Mr. Moratinos addressed the Nizami Ganjavi International Center’s XXVI High-Level Meeting on “Shaping the Future: Rebooting Multilateralism”.



Mr. Moratinos delivered a keynote speech on “Building an Alliance of Civilizations in an Age of Disruption”.



H.E. Ismail Serageldin, Co-Chair of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center (NGIC), and **H.E. Tarja Halonen**, Member of the Board of Trustees of NGIC and former President of Finland, present the **Nizami Ganjavi International Award 2023** to **UNAOC High Representative Mr. Moratinos**.

#UNGA78 Side Events



The High Representative was a guest of honour at the **38th annual International Prayer Breakfast**, which was held in the United Nations Delegates Dining Room as a special prelude to the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly. The International Prayer Breakfast is a non-partisan and non-political event that has been observed annually since 1985 in recognition of the opening of each new UN General Assembly Session. In addition to prayers and readings from the Bible, this year's Breakfast featured a reflection entitled, **"A Foundation of Faith in a World of Change"**. (5 September)



© Permanent Mission of India to the UN

The High Representative presented special remarks at **"Discourse on Peace"**, an event organized by the Permanent Mission of India to the UN to commemorate International Day of Peace and that aimed to deepen understanding of the connection between peace, security, and sustainable development and foster a holistic approach to global harmony. "Peace is in the DNA of the United Nations. It is embedded in its Charter as a fundamental principle. Achieving peace requires mustering political will to address poverty, climate change and inequalities... [It] means fighting racism and hate speech. It means protecting minorities and upholding human rights. Achieving peace requires investing in prevention, diplomacy and mediation to diffuse tensions and bridge gaps," Mr. Moratinos stated at the event. (14 September)

Mr. Moratinos attended the **58th Annual Appeal of Conscience Foundation Gala**, held at The Pierre Hotel in New York City, at the invitation of **Rabbi Arthur Schneider**, President and founder of the Foundation, which is an interfaith organization dedicated to religious freedom and human rights. Numerous dignitaries attended the Gala, including religious leaders, current and former heads of state, and diplomats, which honoured former United States Secretary of State, **Dr. Henry Kissinger**, on the occasion of his 100th birthday. Dr. Kissinger also received at the event the Foundation's 2023 World Statesman Award for Lifetime Contribution to International Relations. (18 September)



Mr. Moratinos delivered a special congratulatory message to **His Eminence Shaykh Abdallah Bin Bayyah**, who received the **American Jewish Committee Human Dignity Award** for his efforts to build peace, champion religious freedom and tolerance, and enhance Muslim-Jewish relations. The gathering was attended by 200 religious and business leaders, diplomats, and interfaith activists and featured a moderated discussion on **"Human Dignity, Global Diplomacy and the Role of Religion in Promoting Peace"**. (20 September)



“Achieving peace requires investing in prevention, diplomacy, dialogue and mediation to diffuse tensions and bridge the gaps. We all have a part to play to achieve peace. Let's not waste more time.”

H.E. MIGUEL ÁNGEL MORATINOS
Under-Secretary-General and
High Representative for UNAOC

Meeting of the High-Level Advisory Council of the High Representative



The meeting of the High-Level Advisory Council of the UNAOC included (l-r): H.E. Dr. Yehuda Lancry, former Ambassador of Israel to France and former Permanent Resident of Israel to the UN; H.E. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, UNAOC High Representative; H.E. Amre Moussa, Chair of the High-Level Advisory Council; H.E. María Fernanda Espinosa, President of the 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Ecuador; H.E. Aminata Touré, former Prime Minister of the Republic of Senegal; Nihal Saad, UNAOC Director; Professor Dr. Jeffrey Sachs, Economist and Director of Columbia University's Center for Sustainable Development in the Earth Institute; and Dr. Elkhail M. Binebine, businessman and philanthropist.



Tenor Jonas Kaufmann, UNAOC Global Advocate for One Humanity, and Nihal Saad, UNAOC Director.



A meeting of the **High-Level Advisory Council of the UNAOC High Representative** was convened on the margins of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly. The Council's role is to provide guidance and advice to the High Representative for the UNAOC on critical matters relevant to religiously- or culturally-charged conflicts across the globe that are likely to generate xenophobia and/or incite violent extremism and polarization. Also in attendance at the meeting was renowned tenor Jonas Kaufmann, UNAOC Global Advocate for the One Humanity Campaign. (18 September)

The High Representative Meets with Portuguese Foreign Minister and Looks Ahead to the 10th Global Forum in 2024



The High Representative met with **H.E. João Gomes Cravinho**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal in Lisbon, Portugal. They discussed the **10th UNAOC Global Forum**, which will be hosted by Portugal in its capital city of Lisbon in 2024 and Mr. Moratinos pointed out that UNAOC is looking forward to working closely on the event with Mr. Cravinho and his capable team. Mr. Cravinho reaffirmed Portugal's commitment to UNAOC's future and noted Portugal's close ties to UNAOC since the organization was led by **H.E. Jorge Sampaio**, former President of Portugal, who served as the first High Representative of UNAOC from 2007 to 2012. (4 September)

Coming in 2024:



10th UNAOC Global Forum
Lisbon, Portugal



Stay tuned!

HIGHLIGHTS



The High Representative briefed Member States on UNAOC's people-centred prevention activities in 2023 at a **UN Office of Counter-Terrorism Quarterly Briefing to Member States**. "Against the backdrop of the rapidly growing presence and activities of terrorist groups and extremists in several parts of Africa, UNAOC continued to strengthen its activities in Africa with focus on the role of women as peacemakers," said Mr. Moratinos. He highlighted UNAOC's efforts to strengthen the capacity of women peacemakers in Africa through the **Women's Alliance for Peace**; its provision of funding and capacity-building support to young peacebuilders through the **Youth Solidarity Fund**; the launch, with UN Women, UN Population Fund, UN Children's Fund, of a pilot initiative "**Strengthening Young Women Peacebuilders' Capacity in Complex Crisis**"; the provision of technical expertise to the **Sport for One Humanity initiative** established by Turkish Airlines; and, the development, with partners, of new tools to foster interreligious and intercultural dialogue. (7 September)



The Under-Secretary-General briefed **Heads of Missions from the European Union Delegation at the United Nations** on the work of the UNAOC and its mandate as a soft power tool for preventing polarization and radicalization. (12 September)



Mr. Moratinos attended the **Sustainable Development Solutions Network's Annual Leadership Council Meeting**, where he and other members of the Council discussed key priorities for the next seven years of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the 17 Goals that were adopted by all UN Member States in 2015. (21 September)

The Office of the UNAOC in Geneva co-organized with the Dharma Alliance a panel discussion on peacebuilding, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Dharma cultures at the UN Office at Geneva. The event explored how Dharmic traditions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism and Sikhism encourage global compliance and ownership of the SDGs. Participants included **H.E. Ambassador David Fernández Puyana** from the University for Peace; **H.E. Professor Soubert Son**, High Privy Councillor to **H.M. the King of Cambodia**; Dr. Prashant Sharma from the Dharma Alliance; **Ms. Marcella Favretto** from the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; **Ms. Ana Luiza Massot Thompson-Flores**, Director of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Liaison Office in Geneva; **Professor Ms. Kusum Jain** from the University of Rajasthan; Professor **Ms. Jaya Krishnakumar** of the University of Geneva and Adviser to UNDP; **Professor Jagbir Singh**, Chancellor of the Central University of Punjab in Batinda; and, **Professor Thich Nhat Tu**, Permanent Vice-Chancellor of the Vietnam Buddhist University, who joined remotely. (5 September)



HIGHLIGHTS



Mr. Moratinos had a constructive meeting with **H.E. Ambassador Sedat Önal**, Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Türkiye to the United Nations. Ambassador Önal reiterated Türkiye's continued support for UNAOC and they exchanged ideas on increasing cooperation between Türkiye and UNAOC. (12 September)



The High Representative met with **H.E. Ruchira Kamboj**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations. They exchanged views to further collaboration in areas of common interest. (8 September)



On behalf of UNAOC, the High Representative signed a Partnership Agreement with **Mr. Ivan Ivanov**, Chair of the Executive Board of the **International Center Alliance of Civilizations**, to pursue joint efforts towards the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue as well as youth empowerment through inclusive leadership, cross-cultural communication and conflict prevention skills. (19 September)



Mr. Moratinos met with **Mr. José Ángel Narváez**, Rector of University of Málaga, and **Mr. Julio Andrade**, Coordinator of the CIFAL Global Network and Associate Director of Project Development and Fund-raising for UNITAR. They agreed to work on joint initiatives to strengthen youth and support UNAOC in their Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism work. (26 September)

SATYARTHI
MOVEMENT for
GLOBAL
COMPASSION



**YOUTH
SUMMIT
ON HUMAN
FRATERNITY
& COMPASSION**

30 SEPTEMBER
TO 2 OCTOBER 2023
VIRAT NAGAR,
NEAR JAIPUR



The High Representative shared a special video message underlining the crucial role youth play in “reducing cross-cultural tension and building bridges between communities” at the first **Youth Summit On Human Fraternity and Compassion** that brought together an estimated 700 Indian youth community leaders and youth leaders from around the world. “We know you are here for solutions and not talking points. We know what can happen if we treat young people as partners,” stated Mr. Moratinos. Hosted by the Zayed Award for Human Fraternity and Satyarthi Movement for Global Compassion, the summit aimed to inspire young people to become change agents who work collectively to create a more peaceful, equitable, sustainable and compassionate future for all. (30 September–2 October)



Mr. Moratinos made an appearance, by video, at the **9th Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians**, hosted by the National Assembly of Vietnam and the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Hanoi, Vietnam. Speaking on “the role of youth in accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through digital transformation and innovation”, the Under-Secretary-General said he was inspired to see so many young members of parliament gathered together in a unique platform since many of the world’s parliament’s largely are dominated by older men. He noted the significant contribution parliamentarians can make to achieving the SDGs and reaffirmed UNAOC’s commitment to strengthening its “work with youth and for youth”. (14–17 September).

PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

Fifteen young professionals – eight females and seven males aged 18–35 years – have been selected to participate at a **UN-African Union Sports Council Youth Forum on the Role of Young People** in the **13th African Games** that is scheduled to take place in **Accra, Ghana** from **21 to 22 November 2023**.

The 20 individuals were chosen, following a call by UNAOC for applications that closed on 4 September, based on their diverse experiences related to major sporting events, sports for peace activities, meaningful youth engagements, and preventing violent extremism (PVE). Representing 15 countries from across the African continent, the selected participants will engage in dialogue with the organizers of the 13th African Games at the Youth Forum, which is being organized by the UN Global Sports Programme in partnership with the African Union Sports Council.

The Forum will focus on meaningful youth engagement, leveraging the power of sport to amplify youth participation in national and regional PVE strategies, and highlighting the significant role of youth in promoting sustainable peace and development in Africa. The UN Global Sports Programme is a joint initiative of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism, UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, the International Centre for Sport Security, and UNAOC.



UNAOC launched a call for applications for the **7th edition of the Young Peacebuilders programme** that will focus on **Latin America and the Caribbean**. Applicants must be between 18 and 25 years old, from the region, and have a strong interest in growing their ability to act as agents of peace in their respective communities and building bridges through intercultural and interfaith dialogue.

Implemented with the generous support of the Agencia Extremeña de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AEXCID), the programme has been strengthening the global network of young peacebuilders who are equipped with the tools to tackle stereotypes, prejudice, and polarization to build more inclusive and peaceful societies since its inception in 2016.



A pre-selection screening of entries for the 2023 **PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival on Migration, Diversity and Social Inclusion** was completed in August by a committee composed of representatives from UN entities, civil society, media companies, and other key stakeholders.

The committee reviewed around **500 short films** from nearly **70 countries** to select a shortlist of the best videos, which, in turn, will be screened by a prestigious International Jury that will help determine the video entries that will receive global recognition during the 2023 PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival later this year in New York City. For more information about the PLURAL+, a joint initiative between UNAOC and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), please visit pluralplus.unaoc.org



UNAOC and BMW Group, with the support of Accenture, organized a webinar on **“Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning”** as part of their joint initiative – the **Intercultural Innovation Hub (IIH)**. Representatives from civil society organizations were mentored on knowledge management skills during the online workshop and learned methods to measure and communicate their success with various stakeholders. They also participated in a series of online sessions to prepare them for an in-person capacity-building workshop that will occur in Munich, Germany from 15 October to 20 October 2023. (12 September)



Twenty-five women peacemakers from Mali, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mozambique convened an online meeting to discuss the current situation in their respective countries and to explore how women mediators could play an influential role building peace at the local and national levels. Participants also conferred on activities to take place over 2023–2024 as part of the joint UNAOC and Mujeres Por Africa Foundation **Women’s Alliance for Peace initiative**, which currently includes a network of more than 50 African women peacemakers. (26 September)



More than 30 youth gathered for a Masterclass session with sports journalist Anne Laure Bonnet, sports sociology researcher Haifa Tlili, and former top-tier sportswoman and educator Sophie Miguet as part of **“News Generation Against Hate”** – a UNAOC project implemented with La Courneuve, a municipality located about 8 kilometres north of Paris, France. The session provided a platform for the young participants to acquire media literacy competencies and storytelling techniques to promote multiculturalism and interreligious understanding in the media. (27 September)



To commemorate **International Day of Peace**, the UN Global Sports Programme organized a virtual discussion entitled **“Peace Beyond the Pitch: Prevention of Violent Extremism through Sports”** aimed at emphasizing the power of sport as a tool to prevent violent extremism (PVE) and pursue the Sustainable Development Goals. Addressing focal points and key stakeholders, UNAOC Programme Manager **Bram Van Haver** stressed the key role of youth in sport-for-PVE policies and practices and highlighted the power of major sporting events to unite people. (28 September)