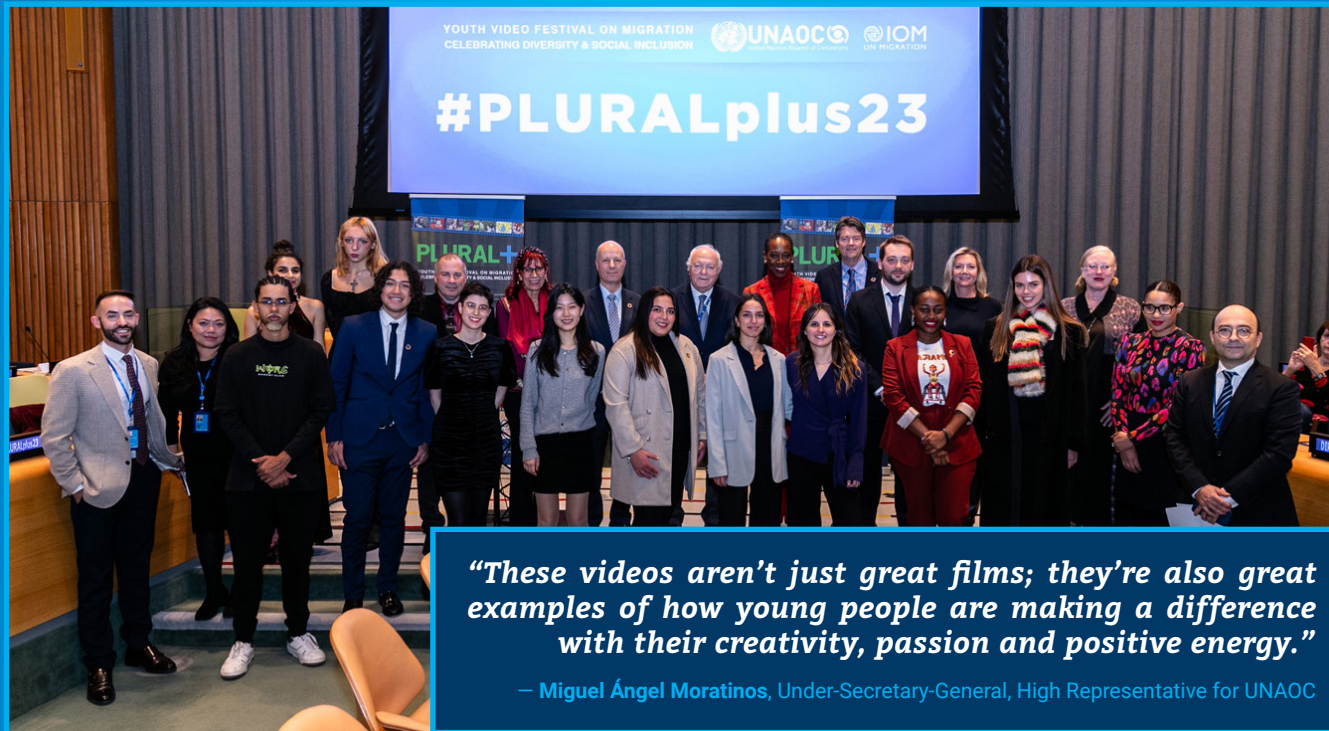


PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival Celebrates Creative Youth Voices at 2023 Ceremony (15 December, New York)



“These videos aren’t just great films; they’re also great examples of how young people are making a difference with their creativity, passion and positive energy.”

— Miguel Ángel Moratinos, Under-Secretary-General, High Representative for UNAOC

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The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) shined a spotlight on 24 young filmmakers from 18 countries at the 2023 Ceremony of the **PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival** held at the UN Headquarters in New York. The annual Ceremony showcases the powerful and thought-provoking impact of original videos that are selected for distinction on the themes of migration, diversity and social inclusion.

Under-Secretary-General Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, High Representative for UNAOC, emphasized how PLURAL+ has become a global platform for fostering “empathy, understanding, compassion, respect and human dignity...”

“PLURAL+ has a soft spot in my heart. I love all forms of human expressions, especially those expressed through film. Filmmaking is the extraordinary alchemy of capturing emotions, weaving stories and most of all shaping perspectives. It’s the magical realm where the power of imagination meets the art of creation,” he said.

IOM Deputy Director-General for Operations, Ms. Ugochi Daniels, praised the young filmmakers for creatively addressing the topics of migration, the contribution of migrants, social inclusion, diversity and combating xenophobia & discrimination. “These short films are not merely cinematic creations; they are powerful narratives that ignite conversations, foster empathy, and challenge our perceptions of the world,” said Ms. Daniels.

Continued on page 2 🕒

PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival Celebrates Creative Youth Voices at 2023 Ceremony (continued)

This year's recipients selected by an international jury included: An ensemble of 14 children and Camera-etc. from Belgium for the animated *Bob le Petit Éléphant* in the Up to 12 Years Old category; Yein Han of Korea for *Letters from Us* honoured for the 13 to 17 Years Old category; and, Taleabong Boris Alemnge of Cameroon for *Arts and Arms* in the 18 to 25 Years Old category. Thiago Gomes of Brazil was conferred the Special Recognition for Combating Xenophobia and Discrimination for the music video, *Eu Não Sou Bandido* (featuring Mytcho). The youth-led non-governmental organization Tai Tanzania of the Republic of Tanzania received the Special Recognition for Sport for One Humanity for the animation, *Najiamini*.

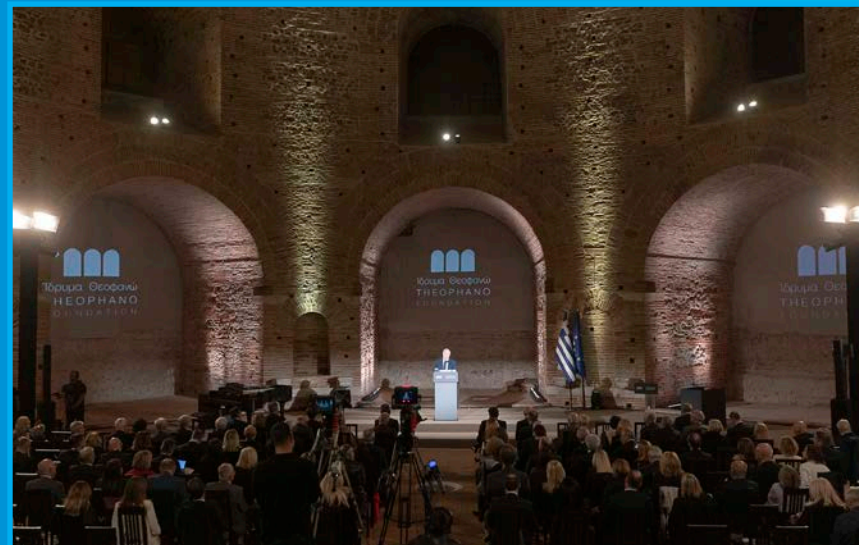
Manon Sabrier-Gesrel and Louise Masson of France were bestowed the Special Recognition for Migrants' Contributions to Societies for *Derrière les Mots*.

This year's PLURAL+ recognized a total of **24 short films** from Belgium, Brazil, Cameroon, France, Germany, Guatemala, Iraq, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Spain, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, and the United States. All videos are now available on the PLURAL+ website: pluralplus.unaoc.org (15 December)

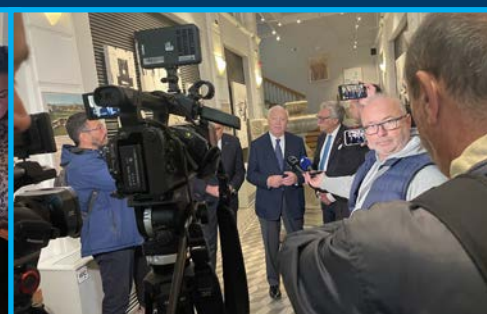


The High Representative Accepts Empress Theophano Prize on behalf of UN Secretary-General

The High Representative accepted the **Empress Theophano Prize** from the **Theophano Foundation** on behalf of its 2023 recipient, UN Secretary-General Mr. Antonio Guterres, in Thessaloniki, Greece. The award recognizes the UN's valuable contribution to “building bridges between nations, its commitment to peace and its work in strengthening international cooperation [that make] humanity safer and more prosperous”. In his remarks accepting the award in the historic Rotunda – a monument rich in European multicultural significance with Roman, Byzantine, Orthodox, Ottoman, and Greek influences – Mr. Moratinos echoed the call of the UN Secretary-General to “build an alliance of peace that spans the global and the local to meet the test of our times”. (9 November)



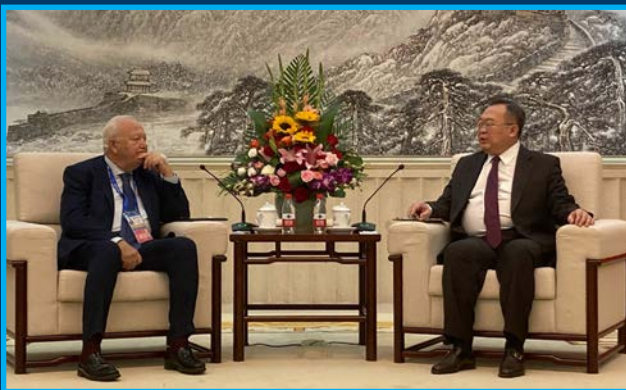
While in Thessaloniki, Greece, the High Representative met with **H.E. Mr. Margaritis Schinas**, Vice President of the European Commission; **Mr. David Saltiel**, President of the Jewish Community; and, **H.E. Ms. Olga Kefalogianni**, Minister of Tourism of Greece during a tour of the Jewish Museum.



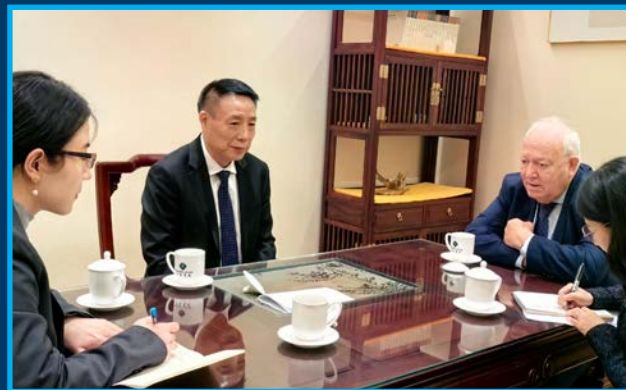
On its milestone 10th anniversary, Mr. Moratinos praised China's Belt and Road Initiative noting that it "offers a new vision for a better future based on mutual respect for all humanity, multilateral cooperation, understanding civilizations and charting a course for a prosperous future for all." Mr. Moratinos passed on the compliment during VIP remarks he was invited to deliver at the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation thematic event entitled "People to People Bonds: United for a Prosperous Future" in Beijing, China. "Through the Belt and Road Initiative, China brings a tremendous instrument that will support our common objectives of fostering understanding and dialogue between different religions, different cultures, different civilizations and at the same time create the environment for exchanging ideas, respecting each other, and working together," he said. (18 October)



On the margins of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing, China, Mr. Moratinos met with H.E. Mr. Liu Jianchao, Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, and H.E. Mr. Zhu Rui, former Assistant Minister, International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. (17 October)



The High Representative with H.E. Mr. Liu Jianchao, Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China



The High Representative with H.E. Mr. Zhu Rui, former Assistant Minister, International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China



While in Beijing, the High Representative spoke with members of the Chinese press



The High Representative delivered remarks at a special Global Tolerance Alliance event at the Conference of Parties 28 (COP28) entitled, “Connected in Our Common Humanity”, hosted by the Ministry of Tolerance and Coexistence of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in Dubai. Mr. Moratinos emphasized that “the path towards living together in peace as one humanity is one that should be based on justice, respect for human rights and protecting human dignity”. All forms of hatred and discrimination based on religion, belief, ethnicity or gender are “an affront to human rights”, he pointed out, before expressing his pride in UNAOC as “a recognized global platform for interreligious and intercultural dialogue with the aim of bridging the cultural divides and building cohesive, inclusive and peaceful societies”. (3 December)

On the margins of COP28, Mr. Moratinos met with faith actors and religious leaders including the Secretary-General of the Muslim Council of Elders, Judge Mohamed Abdelsalam, as well as representatives from The Vatican and Al-Azhar. They also caught up with Mr. Adama Dieng, former United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, and Iyad Abumoghli, Founder and Director of the UN Environment Programme Faith for Earth Initiative. (3 December)



The High Representative and UNAOC Director, Ms. Nihad Saad, took part in the inauguration of a first-ever Faith Pavilion within the framework of the Conference of Parties 28 (COP28), which was established in recognition that more than 84 per cent of the world’s population identifies with a religion. Representatives from religious communities and institutions gathered in the Faith Pavilion support of climate action and the goals outlined in the Paris Agreement and endorsed an Abu Dhabi Interfaith Statement for COP28 co-signed by His Holiness Pope Francis and His Excellency the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Ahmed el-Tayeb. (3 December)



The High Representative Makes Off UNAOC Convenes 2nd Global Dialogue on Artificial Intelligence “Towards the World of #OneHumanity”

With effective global governance and strong public-private partnerships, Artificial Intelligence can enhance daily life the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Moratinos, emphasized at the **Second Global Dialogue on Artificial Intelligence (AI)** entitled “Towards the World of #OneHumanity”, which was organized by UNAOC, in collaboration with the Onuart Foundation. The multi-stakeholder, multilateral event brought together diverse perspectives and expertise from around the world to explore the development of responsible, ethical, and equitable AI that is rooted in transparency and accountability.

The gathering also was designed to deepen, amplify and strengthen public-private collaboration to address possible dangers and misuse of AI while harnessing its positive impact, including advancing the UN’s three pillars— peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. AI “in the service of humanity, has the potential to empower diversity, respect and progress for all. However, establishing guardrails and adapting a governance framework are necessary and urgent to steer this technology towards building a better world,” Mr. Moratinos stressed. Still, while AI is certain to contribute to humanity’s progress, it will never replace “the authenticity and empathy of human interactions”, he concluded at the event.

UNAOC Director, Ms. Nihal Saad, also participated in the event as the chair of the Global Dialogue’s opening session, which focused on the quest for human-centered AI, against growing digital divides and systemic biases. She also chaired a session that explored how AI-powered media is pioneering a new era in communication that included UNAOC Web and Multimedia Specialist, Ms. Julie Ann Ladan, as a panellist.

Other sessions examined the impact of AI on the Sustainable Development Goals and the effort to build inclusive and sustainable societies; artificial creativity, including the intersection of digital art and generative AI; ethical dilemmas such as the implications of AI in shaping digital identities; developing best practices for AI from global development to medical research; revolutionizing finance and economy with AI; designing human-centered AI through a multilateral and multi-stakeholder approach; and, building human-centered and inclusive AI through multilateral cooperation to achieve the One Humanity vision. (20 October)



“At this important juncture in history, innovation and inclusion are crucial, and Artificial Intelligence in the service of humanity has the potential to empower diversity, respect and progress for all. However, establishing guardrails and adapting a governance framework are necessary and urgent to steer this technology towards building a better world.”

— Miguel Ángel Moratinos, Under-Secretary-General, High Representative for UNAOC



The Municipality of La Courneuve, France Hosts 3rd Iteration of the UNAOC City Dialogue Series

The municipality of La Courneuve, France hosted the third iteration of UNAOC’s “City Dialogue” series, following successful editions in Seville in 2021 and Los Angeles in 2020. Focusing on the overarching theme of “Building Intercultural Cities”, more than 100 participants from over a dozen cities gathered at the Diplomatic Archives of the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs with the aim of promoting intercultural exchange and advancing inclusion within diverse communities. In his opening remarks, the High Representative of UNAOC, Mr. Moratinos, stressed the need for an innovative and enduring multilateralism that recognizes cities as important partners and he highlighted the key role municipalities play in peacebuilding and reconciliation strategies. Mr. Gilles Poux, Mayor of La Courneuve, called on those in attendance to advance political commitments to municipal strategies that foster intercultural dialogue and durable peace and security for all. (13–14 November)



UNAOC, UNOSAPG Commemorate 75th Anniversary of Genocide Convention with Religious Leaders at Side Event



The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) and the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide facilitated a discussion with religious leaders on their role in upholding the values and principles of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide on the margins of the commemoration of its 75th anniversary. The High Representative for UNAOC, Mr. Moratinos, urged those in attendance “not take for granted that the Genocide Convention and its principles will be promoted, protected, and implemented in the absence of the unwavering and active commitment of all of us”. He further highlighted the importance of interreligious and intercultural dialogue in bridging cultural divides and building cohesive, inclusive and peaceful societies. Meanwhile, Ms. Alice Wairimu Nderitu, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, said “we owe it to the victims of the genocide and the future generations” to reflect deeply on how we can collectively uphold the Convention along with religious actors for “Never Again” to be “Never Again”. A panel of religious leaders and actors also shared insights on how religious communities are upholding the legacy of the Genocide Convention at a time of rising risk factor for genocide and related crimes. (28 November)

UNAOC Presents UNCA Ricardo Ortega Memorial Prize for Broadcast Media

The UNAOC High Representative presented awards to recipients of the **Ricardo Ortega Memorial Prize for Broadcast Media** for television and radio coverage of the UN, UN agencies and field operations at the 2023 awards at the **27th Annual United Nations Correspondents Association Awards** in New York City. The gold award went to NHK Special of Japan; silver to India's Shalini Singh and bronze to Ghana's Nadima Umar Uthman. UNAOC is a proud sponsor of the Ricardo Ortega Memorial Prize for Broadcast Media, which is named in honour of one of the leading Spanish journalists of his generation who reported from dozens of countries, including Afghanistan, Chechnya, Yugoslavia and Georgia, prior to his tragic death in Haiti by gunfire in March 2004. Mr. Ortega was the New York correspondent for Spain's Antena 3 TV and had a reputation for honesty, independence, determination and courage. (15 December)



During the 27th Annual UNCA Awards, the UN Secretary-General honoured renowned Hollywood actress **Sharon Stone** with the UN Global Citizen Award for her humanitarian efforts



Photos by: Bogdan Grytsiv



USG Moratinos with the UNAOC team



At Egypt's Dar al-Ifta **8th International Conference on "Fatwa and the Challenges of the Third Millennium"** held in Cairo, the Under-Secretary-General for UNAOC highlighted in a video message the role of fatwa authorities in addressing contemporary challenges under the umbrella of the General Secretariat for Fatwa Authorities Worldwide. (18 October)



UNAOC Institutional and Member States Relations Adviser Ms. Anna Pavlyuchenko commended the role of Kazakhstan in promoting interreligious dialogue around the world in its address to the **21st Session of the Secretariat of the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions** held in Astana. Religious leaders gathered with representatives from 23 countries at the event. (11 October)



Mr. Moratinos was a panellist at a symposium entitled **"MAROC-EUROPE: Immersion dans une relation singulière"** that explored the unique relationship between the north African nation of Morocco and Europe. Organized by MGH Partners and the Arab World Institute the event was held in Paris, France and featured an exhibition of pieces from diplomatic archives loaned by the Quai d'Orsay. (11 October)

USG Moratinos Emphasizes Cooperation in Rebuilding Multilateralism at Doha Forum

Mr. Miguel Moratinos addressed the closing panel of the Doha Forum in Qatar entitled “Building Shared Futures”. Emphasizing the need for multilateral cooperation and multi-stakeholder commitment, he said, “Institutions need to adapt to the new realities of today...Peace should be the main goal for our shared future.” Established in 2000, the Doha Forum is a platform for global dialogue on critical contemporary challenges that promotes the interchange of ideas, policymaking, and action-oriented recommendations. (10 December)

On the margins of the 21st Edition of Doha Forum, the High Representative met with H.E. Mr. Soltan bin Saad Al-Muraikhi, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Qatar, and H.E. Dr. Mohammed bin Abdulaziz Al-Khulaifi, Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar. (10 December)



Mr. Moratinos with H.E. Mr. Soltan bin Saad Al-Muraikhi, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Qatar



Mr. Moratinos with H.E. Dr. Mohammed bin Abdulaziz Al-Khulaifi, Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar

UNAOC Supports “If War Is A Choice, Peace Can Be Too” Side Event

UNAOC participated in a side event on the contribution of youth to peace and security entitled “If War Is A Choice, Peace Can Be Too”, organized by Rondine Cittadella della Pace with the Permanent Missions of Costa Rica, Italy and Monaco to the UN. “Peace is often an elusive goal, but only if we let it out of our sight. And indeed peace is a choice as much as war is a choice.... the world needs sustainable peace, one that withstands the crises of our times,” Mr. Moratinos pointed out during his opening remarks. “Prevention and peacebuilding are at the core of the Secretary General’s New Agenda for Peace... young people should not be ‘the missing peace’, they should be the centerpiece of our efforts,” he added. UNAOC Programming Coordinator, Mr. Alessandro Girola, presented UNAOC’s youth-focused activities at the event, stating that UNAOC’s aim is to “create a global movement of young peacebuilders”. Mr. Youssef Aroog, an alumnus of UNAOC Young Peacebuilders, took part in a panel discussion that explored investment in transformative peace education. (5 December)





The High Representative participated in a **Steering Committee Meeting of the Global Programme on Countering Terrorist Threats against Vulnerable Targets**. Along with other implementing partners of the Programme, which include the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), and the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), Mr. Moratinos took stock of the progress achieved and discussed 2024 strategic priorities to support Member States.

The programme, led by UNOCT in partnership with UNAOC, CTED, and UNICRI, and in close consultation with INTERPOL, aims to identify and share policies and good practices to understand, prevent and counter terrorist threats against vulnerable targets. UNAOC actively engaged in the elaboration of the modular guide on religious sites, one of the five guides produced as addenda to the UN Compendium of Good Practices on Critical Infrastructure Protection. (5 December)



Mr. Moratinos exchanged views on pressing global issues with the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations, **H.E. Ambassador Maged Abdelaziz**, at the UNAOC headquarters in New York City. In his social media post about the meeting, Mr. Moratinos referred to Mr. Abdelaziz “a savvy politician and a good friend”. (27 November)



The Under-Secretary-General discussed recent global developments with **Alexandre Guessel**, the Council of Europe’s Special Representative of the Secretary General on Antisemitic, Anti-Muslim and other forms of religious intolerance and hate crimes at a meeting in New York City. (22 November)



Ms. Nihal Saad, Director of UNAOC, discussed opportunities for joint collaboration with **Ms. Şafak Pavey**, Senior Adviser at the United Nations Refugee Agency. Ms. Saad noted that UNAOC is looking forward to participating in the Global Refugee Forum 2023, #GRF2023, which will be held 13–15 December in Geneva, Switzerland. (15 November)

MEETINGS



The High Representative had fruitful discussions with **H.E. Ahmad Faisal Muhamad**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Permanent Mission of Malaysia to the United Nations, during a meeting at the UNAOC office in New York City. (6 November)



Mr. Moratinos met representatives from the **Fundación Triángulo Extremadura** and **Red en Corpora Libertad** to discuss the organization's activities, which are funded by Agencia Extremeña de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AEXCID) and implemented with COMCAVIS TRANS EL SALVADOR, Cooperation Assembly for Peace and Triángulo Foundation. (3 November)



UNAOC Director, Ms. Nihal Saad, met a delegation from the **Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (IAO)** to discuss a shared commitment to promoting intercultural and interfaith dialogue as tools for peace. The delegation briefed Ms. Saad on the IAO's statutory goals and recent initiatives, including the protection of cultural monuments. (13 October)



Ms. Saad met with **Dr. Vinay Sahasrabudhe**, President of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, and **H.E. Mrs. Ruchira Kamboj**, Permanent Representative and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of India to the United Nations. Ms. Saad was joined by **Mr. Alessandro Girola**, Programming Coordinator, and **Ms. Dana Podmolikova**, Project Management Specialist - Youth. (9 October)

On the margins of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly, UNAOC welcomed to its New York City headquarters the official **UN Youth Delegates** of several Member State delegations. UNAOC's programming team provided an overview of UNAOC's youth-focused portfolio and some of the policy work related to youth that UNAOC actively engages in at the inter-agency level. The session concluded with an open discussion on meaningful youth engagement in policymaking in which the Youth Delegates shared their personal experiences and recommendations for advancing the agenda. (9 October)



UN-AUSC YOUTH FORUM EXPLORES THE ROLE OF YOUTH AT 13TH AFRICAN GAMES



Twenty youth leaders from 19 countries across Africa took part in a **UN-African Union Sports Council (AUSC) Youth Forum on the Role of Young People in the 13th African Games**, which will be hosted next year in Accra, Ghana.

The young people also explored the power of sports and major sporting events in preventing violent extremism with officials and representatives from UN entities, the AUSC, the 13th African Games Local Organising Committee (LOC), the AU Youth Division, the Ghana National Peace Council, the Ghana Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the National Youth Authority. The event was organized by UNAOC and the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), within the framework of the United Nations Global Programme on Security of Major Sporting Events and Promotion of Sport and its Values as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism (“Global Programme”), in collaboration with the AUSC and the 13th African Games LOC.

The Youth Forum was the fifth iteration of this youth-focused series, following the 2021 Online Youth Consultation on Preventing Violent Extremism through Sport; the MENA Youth Forum on Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) through Sport (2022) in Rabat, Morocco; the Global Youth Forum on PVE through Sport in Fez, Morocco (2022); and the ASEAN-UN Regional Youth Forum on Preventing Violent Extremism through Sport in Bangkok, Thailand (2022).

The Global Programme aims to develop innovative policies and practices to strengthen the protection of sporting events through enhanced international cooperation, while promoting the values of sport as a means to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism. It is led by UNOCT, in partnership with UNAOC, the UN Interregional Crime Research Institute (UNICRI), the International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS), and in consultation with the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED). *(21–22 November)*

UNAOC YOUNG PEACEBUILDERS SYMPOSIUM HELD IN CÓRDOBA, SPAIN

UNAOC hosted the final symposium for the sixth edition of the **Young Peacebuilders programme** in Cordoba, Spain. The cohort of young peacebuilders gathered from Latin America and the Caribbean to showcase initiatives they carried out in their communities to promote peace, respect for diversity, and mutual understanding. Additionally, the young peacebuilders had a chance to discuss their initiatives as well as the role of youth in peacebuilding with invited guests from a wide range of fields, including representatives from civil society, media and academia. The UNAOC Young Peacebuilders programme is a peace education initiative implemented by UNAOC with the generous support of the Agencia Extremeña de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AEXCID). (29 November)



INTERCULTURAL INNOVATIONS HUB WORKSHOP HELD IN MUNICH, GERMANY



A capacity-building workshop for recipients of the current edition of the **Intercultural Innovation Hub (IIH)** took place in Munich, Germany. Hosted by UNAOC, the BMW Group, and Accenture, the workshop focused on organizational development strategy, sustainable project scaling, as well as pitching and effective storytelling. Representatives of grassroots organizations participated in a series of training sessions, held at the BMW Headquarters and Accenture's offices, which aimed to bolster their individual and organizational capacities and improve the long-term impact of their projects, thereby allowing them to sustainably expand and replicate their initiatives in other contexts. The delivery of the training is part of a year-long comprehensive support package that has been tailored for the IIH recipients. In the several months prior to the workshop in Munich, the recipients attended a series of webinars and masterclasses that were implemented in collaboration with Accenture and the IIH pool of experts. The current edition of the IIH includes grassroots initiatives from Australia, Brazil, Colombia, Germany, Guatemala, Indonesia, Israel, Jordan, Mexico and South Africa. (15–20 October)



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