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## United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

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The **United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)** convened its 11th Global Forum in Riyadh, hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the overarching theme **“UNAOC: Two Decades of Dialogue for Humanity – Advancing a New Era of Mutual Respect and Understanding in a Multipolar World”**.

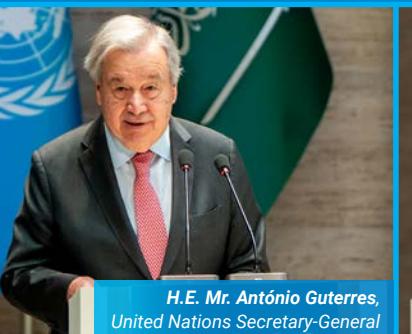
The Forum brought together **over 1,000 participants**, including high-level political leaders, multilateral organizations, religious and faith actors, and representatives from the private sector, civil society, academia, and key stakeholders. A total of **104 official delegations** attended, including **up to 40 Ministers and Deputy Ministers** and **6 Heads of International Organizations**. Youth engagement remained central to the Forum, with **71 young leaders** from 47 countries showcasing action, innovation, and impact.

The programme featured the **High-Level Meeting of the UNAOC Group of Friends**; Plenary Sessions on key themes, including **“Revitalizing Multilateralism through Inclusive Dialogue”** and **“Interfaith Dialogue as a Bridge to Peace and One Humanity”**; and interactive thematic discussions with distinguished speakers sharing valuable insights. The gathering also spotlighted special segments such as a dedicated **Youth Forum**, where alumni of UNAOC youth programmes showcased their impact stories, and the **PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival Ceremony**, which celebrated outstanding short films from young creators worldwide.

Throughout the two-day gathering, the message was clear: dialogue should be an imperative choice. As the world marks 20 years of the official launch of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, leaders reaffirmed that peace, inclusion, and mutual respect are essential in these challenging times. (14–15 December)



**H.H. Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud,**  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom  
of Saudi Arabia



**H.E. Mr. António Guterres,**  
United Nations Secretary-General



**H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos,**  
USG, High Representative for UNAOC and  
UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia



**H.E. Ms. Elma Saiz Delgado,**  
Minister of Inclusion, Social Security  
and Migration of Spain



**H.E. Mr. Binali Yıldırım,**  
Former Prime Minister and Former Speaker  
of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye

The **Official Opening Ceremony** of the **11th UNAOC Global Forum** set a compelling tone, marking the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and reaffirming the enduring importance of dialogue, mutual respect, and understanding in today's complex global landscape.

The Forum kicked off with remarks from the Host Country, represented by **His Highness Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; **H.E. Mr. António Guterres**, United Nations Secretary-General; **H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos**, High Representative for UNAOC and UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia; and the two co-sponsors of UNAOC, represented by **H.E. Ms. Elma Saiz Delgado**, Minister of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration of Spain, and **H.E. Mr. Binali Yıldırım**, Former Prime Minister and Former Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye. Collectively, they underscored the vital role of UNAOC as a global platform for dialogue, mutual understanding, and cooperation in support of peace and inclusive societies.



United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres reminded participants that in a world more connected yet more fractured than ever, building bridges across faiths, cultures, and civilizations is imperative. "Some may try to dismiss the goals of the Alliance of Civilizations as utopian. To claim that dialogue and cooperation are out of fashion – too soft for our hard world. They are wrong. The mission of the Alliance of Civilizations is bold. It is essential. And it is more urgent than ever," he said.

Under-Secretary-General Miguel Ángel Moratinos, High Representative for UNAOC and UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia, underscored a shared responsibility, stating, "Let us leave Riyadh with a renewed conviction: that dialogue is stronger than division, that respect is more powerful than hatred, and that peace is not a distant dream – it is a responsibility we share today." (14 December)



**H.E. Mr. José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero,**  
Prime Minister of Spain (2004–2011)



**H.E. Sheikh Dr. Mohammad bin Abdulkarim  
Al-Issa,** Secretary General of the Muslim  
World League (2004–2011)

## Special Address on the Occasion of the 20th Anniversary of UNAOC

In a "Special Address on the Occasion of the 20th Anniversary of UNAOC," distinguished speakers including **H.E. Mr. José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero**, Prime Minister of Spain (2004–2011), and **H.E. Sheikh Dr. Mohammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa**, Secretary General of the Muslim World League, reflected on two decades of the Alliance's efforts to advance dialogue, while underscoring the enduring relevance of its mission in today's increasingly complex global landscape. (14 December)



H.E. Mr. Walid bin Abdul Karim Al-Khuraiji,  
Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



H.E. Mr. António Guterres,  
United Nations Secretary-General



H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos,  
USG, High Representative for UNAOC and  
UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia



H.E. Ms. Elma Saiz Delgado,  
Minister of Inclusion, Social Security  
and Migration of Spain



H.E. Mr. Binali Yıldırım,  
Former Prime Minister and Former Speaker  
of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye

The 11th UNAOC Global Forum convened 104 official delegations in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for the **High-level Meeting of the UNAOC Group of Friends** – including Ministers, Deputy Ministers, and Heads of International Organizations, who reaffirmed their commitment to the Alliance's enduring mission.

Co-chaired by **Under-Secretary-General Miguel Ángel Moratinos**, High Representative for UNAOC and UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia, and **H.E. Mr. Walid bin Abdul Karim Al-Khuraiji**, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the meeting featured opening remarks from United Nations Secretary-General **H.E. Mr. António Guterres**, and the co-sponsors of UNAOC, represented by **H.E. Mr. Binali Yıldırım**, former Prime Minister and former Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye, and **H.E. Ms. Elma Saiz Delgado**, Minister of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration of Spain.

Addressing the UNAOC Group of Friends, Secretary-General António Guterres emphasized, "Your continued engagement and support, including through the Voluntary Trust Fund, will be critical as we chart the next phase of this journey. I thank you for supporting the Alliance's mandate. Let us make the most of this anniversary not only to reflect, but to recommit – to dialogue, multilateralism, and human dignity."

Under-Secretary-General Miguel Ángel Moratinos, High Representative for UNAOC and UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia, reflected on the path forward, stating, "As we look ahead, the Alliance stands ready to work with you – to renew trust, to counter narratives of division, and to reaffirm a simple but powerful truth: that our diversity, when governed by mutual respect and shared responsibility, remains one of humanity's greatest strengths."

H.E. Mr. Walid bin Abdul Karim Al-Khuraiji, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, stressed, "The Kingdom affirms its conviction that dialogue is essential to building peace and strengthening trust between peoples."

The meeting continued with interventions from Member States and International Organizations of the UNAOC Group of Friends. During the General Debate, speakers collectively underscored their commitment to UNAOC's mission to foster dialogue, mutual respect, and cooperation as essential pillars for peace, inclusion, and multilateralism in today's world. A total of 66 delegates at the level of Ministers, Vice-Ministers, Heads of International Organizations, and Ambassadors took the floor.

A key outcome of the meeting was the formal adoption of the **Final Communiqué of the 11th Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations**, which underscored the collective resolve to strengthen intercultural and interreligious engagement and enhance cooperation in addressing shared priorities. (14 December)



# Interventions by Member States and International Organizations / Members of the UNAOC Group of Friends



**H.E. Mr. Ervin Ibrahimović,**  
Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations  
and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Montenegro



**H.E. Mr. Mohamed Ali Nafti,**  
Minister for Foreign Affairs,  
Migration and Tunisians Abroad



**H.E. Mr. Elmedin Konaković,**  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of Bosnia and Herzegovina



**H.E. Ms. Rosa Yolanda Villavicencio Mapy,**  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of the Republic of Colombia



**H.E. Md. Touhid Hossain,**  
Adviser for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Interim  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh



**H.E. Mr. Abdulla Khaleel,**  
Minister for Foreign Affairs of  
the Republic of Maldives



**H.E. Mr. Palamagamba John Aidan Mwaluko Kabudi,**  
Minister of Information, Culture, Arts and Sports  
of the United Republic of Tanzania



**H.E. Mr. Mahamadou Kone,**  
Minister of Religious Affairs, Worship and  
Customs of the Republic of Mali



**H.E. Mr. Adil Karimli,**  
Minister of Culture  
of the Republic of Azerbaijan



**H.E. Mr. Emad Abdullah Hamdan,**  
Minister of Culture  
of the State of Palestine



**H.E. Ms. Mendy Del Socorro Aráuz Silva,**  
Minister of Education of the  
Republic of Nicaragua



**H.E. Mr. Musadik Masood Malik,**  
Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental  
Coordination of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan



**H.E. Mr. Usame Zukorlić,** Minister without Portfolio in  
charge of Social Stability, Regional Cooperation and the  
Promotion of Social Dialogue of the Republic of Serbia



**H.E. Ms. Nancy Namrouqa,**  
Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of  
the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan



**H.E. Mr. Sofiane Chaib,**  
Secretary of State in charge of the National Community  
Abroad of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria



**H.E. Mr. Nasser Kamel,**  
Secretary General of the Union  
for the Mediterranean (UfM)

## Interventions by Members of the UNAOC Group of Friends (continued)



**H.E. Mr. Salim M. AlMalik,**  
Director General, Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO)



**H.E. Ms. Ana Isabel Xavier,**  
Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Portuguese Republic



**H.E. Ms. Boglárka Illés,**  
State Secretary for Bilateral Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary



**H.E. Mr. Nabil Riad Habashi,**  
Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates of the Arab Republic of Egypt



**H.E. Mr. Zhai Jun,**  
Special Envoy of the Chinese Government on the Middle East Issue



**H.E. Mr. Muzaffar Madrakhimov,**  
Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan



**H.E. Mr. Ahmad Hassen Al-Hammadi,**  
Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar



**H.E. Mr. Robert Abisoghomonyan,**  
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia



**H.E. Mr. Periasamy Kumaran,**  
Secretary (East),  
Ministry of External Affairs of India



**H.E. Mr. Kazem Gharib Abadi,**  
Deputy Minister for International and Legal Affairs,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran



**H.E. Mr. Ahmed Gurbanov,**  
Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan



**H.E. Ms. Miriam Shyti,**  
Deputy Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania



**Hon. Pedro Roque,** Vice-President and President of the Third Standing Committee on Human Rights and Dialogue Among Civilizations, Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)



**H.E. Mr. António de Almeida Ribeiro,**  
Ambassador,  
Acting Secretary-General of KAICIID



**H.E. Mr. Sayit Yusuf,**  
Deputy Secretary General, International Organization of Turkic Culture (TÜRKSOY)



**H.E. Mr. Herbert Scheibner,**  
Special Envoy of the Republic of Austria

## Interventions by Members of the UNAOC Group of Friends (continued)



**H.E. Ms. Tiina Intelmann,**  
Ambassador, Special Envoy for Multilateralism and Mediation,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia



**H.E. Mr. Jean-Christophe Gilbert Marie Peaucelle,**  
Ambassador, Religious Affairs Advisor,  
Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France



**H.E. Mr. Johan Verkammen,**  
Special Envoy for the Middle East  
of the Kingdom of Belgium



**H.E. Mr. Christian Kamill,**  
Ambassador, Special Envoy for Interreligious and  
Intercultural Dialogue, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden



**H.E. Mr. Ernesto Soberón Guzmán,**  
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of  
Cuba to the United Nations



**H.E. Mr. Maged Abdelfattah Abdelaziz,**  
Ambassador, Permanent Observer of the  
League of Arab States to the United Nations



**H.E. Mr. Ahmad Faisal Muhamad,**  
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of  
Malaysia to the United Nations



**H.E. Mr. Kirill Logvinov,**  
Director of the Department of International Organizations,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



**H.E. Ms. Tadeja Forštnar Perkić,** Head of the Department  
for International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign and  
European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia



**H.E. Mrs. Magdalena Ilieva-Dimitrova,**  
Director of the UN and Global Affairs Directorate, Ministry  
of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria



**H.E. Mr. Madiyar Menilbekov,**  
Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan  
to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



**H.E. Mr. David Velásquez Caraballo,**  
Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of  
Venezuela to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



**H.E. Mr. Anatolii Petrenko,**  
Ambassador of Ukraine to the  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



**H.E. Mr. Hoang Huu Anh,**  
Ambassador of Viet Nam to the  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



**H.E. Mrs. Candice Williams De Roux,**  
Ambassador of Panama  
to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



**H.E. Mr. Ricardo Silva-Santisteban Benza,**  
Ambassador of the Republic of Peru to the  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

## Interventions by Members of the UNAOC Group of Friends (continued)

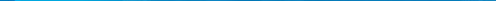
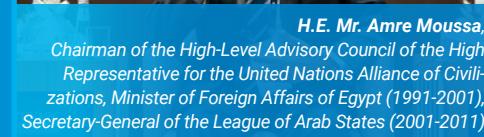




The first Plenary Session of the 11th UNAOC Global Forum in Riyadh examined how responsible leadership in a multipolar world can contribute to revitalizing multilateralism through inclusive and constructive engagement.

Entitled **"Leading Responsibly in a Multipolar World: Revitalizing Multilateralism through Inclusive Dialogue,"** the session featured high-level interventions from **His Royal Highness Prince Turki bin Faisal Al Saud**, Chairman of the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies; **H.E. Ms. Aminata Touré**, Former Prime Minister and High Representative for the President of Senegal; **H.E. Mr. George Andreas Papandreou**, Prime Minister of Greece (2009–2011); **H.E. Ms. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović**, former President of the Republic of Croatia; **H.E. Mr. Amre Moussa**, Chairman of the High-Level Advisory Council of the UNAOC High Representative; **H.E. Ms. Benita Ferrero-Waldner**, former European Commissioner and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria; and **H.E. Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés**, former President of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The session was moderated by **Ms. Nihal Saad**, Director of UNAOC, and highlighted the importance of principled leadership, inclusive approaches, and renewed commitment to cooperation in strengthening multilateralism in today's evolving global context. (14 December)





Moderator: H.R.H. Princess Rym Ali,  
President of the Anna Lindh Foundation



His Virtue Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshukur Pashazade,  
Grand Mufti of the Caucasus, Chairman of the Caucasus  
Muslims' Board and Co-Chair of the Interreligious Council



H.E. Dr. Abdullah Alfuzan,  
Secretary-General of the King Abdulaziz  
Centre for Intercultural Communication



H.E. Metropolitan Emmanuel Geron,  
Elder Metropolitan of Chalcedon, Metropolitan of  
France by the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical  
Patriarchate, Board Member of the KAICIID



H.E. Ms. Rebeca Grynspan,  
Secretary-General, United Nations Conference  
on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)



H.E. Ambassador António de Almeida-Ribeiro,  
Acting Secretary King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International  
Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID)



H.E. Dr. Salim AlMalik,  
Director-General of ICESCO



Plenary Session 2, "Faith in Humanity: Interfaith Dialogue as a Bridge to Peace and #OneHumanity", brought together prominent religious leaders and faith-based actors for a substantive exchange on good practices and lived experiences that demonstrate the role of religious leadership in advancing peace across diverse traditions.

The discussion was moderated by **Her Royal Highness Princess Rym Ali**, President of the Anna Lindh Foundation, who guided an engaging dialogue on strengthening partnerships and advancing a shared vision of #OneHumanity through inclusive engagement. Distinguished speakers included **His Virtue Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshukur Pashazade**, Grand Mufti of the Caucasus and Chairman of the Caucasus Muslims' Board; **H.E. Dr. Abdullah Alfuzan**, Secretary-General of the King Abdulaziz Centre for Intercultural Communication; **H.E. Metropolitan Emmanuel Geron**, Elder Metropolitan of Chalcedon and Metropolitan of France of the Ecumenical Patriarchate; **H.E. Ms. Rebeca Grynspan**, Secretary-General of UNCTAD; **H.E. Ambassador António de Almeida-Ribeiro**, Acting Secretary of KAICIID; and **H.E. Dr. Salim AlMalik**, Director-General of ICESCO.

The session underscored the importance of interfaith cooperation, trust-building, and sustained collaboration among religious and institutional actors in promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies. (14 December)



Plenary Session 2: "Faith in Humanity: Interfaith Dialogue as a Bridge to Peace and #OneHumanity"

Over the two days of the **11th UNAOC Global Forum in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**, a series of eight thematic sessions brought together leaders, practitioners, and experts for in-depth discussions on issues central to UNAOC's mandate. These parallel sessions addressed emerging and enduring priorities, provided a platform for interactive exchange, and highlighted good practices and collaborative approaches to building more inclusive and cohesive societies.

### Thematic Session 1: "From Digital Realities to Real World Divides: Confronting Deepfakes, AI-driven Disinformation, and the New Algorithmically Amplified Face of Hate"



Speakers: **H.E. Dr. Ismail Serageldin**, Co-Chair of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center (NGIC), Former Vice President, World Bank Group; **Mr. Atif Rashid**, Editor-in-Chief, Analyst News; and **Mr. Achraf Tastaout**, Data Scientist in the banking sector. Moderator: **Ms. Julie Ann Ladanan**, Public Information Officer, UNAOC.

### Thematic Session 2: "Transformative Education for a Changing World: Nurturing Respect and Shared Values in Diverse Societies"



Speakers: **H.E. Mr. Abdulrahman Al-Arifi**, Senior Advisor Minister of Education Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; **H.E. Mr. Mladen Ivanić**, Fmr Chairman of the Presidency, Bosnia and Herzegovina; **H.E. Mr. Senén Florensa**, President, IEMED; and **Prof. Dr. Abdelhak Azzouzi**, President of UNCAC, Founding Member, Directors Board Member EU-ROMED University of Fez. Moderator: **Mr. Riccardo Gulletta**, Senior Project Officer, North-South Centre of the COE.

### Thematic Session 3: "Upholding Human Dignity and Fostering Belonging: Reframing Migration Narratives and Rethinking Cities as Inclusive Spaces for All"



Speakers: **H.E. Mr. Dimitris Avramopoulos**, Member of the Hellenic Parliament, EU Commissioner (2014-2019), Minister of Foreign Affairs (2012-2013), and Minister for National Defense of Greece (2011-2012, 2013-2014); **Mr. Gilles Poux**, Mayor, La Courneuve (France); **Mr. Alessandro Ghinelli**, Mayor, Arezzo (Italy); **Prof. Spyridon Flogaitis**, Director, European Public Law Organization (EPO). Moderator: **H.E. Mr. Volkan Bozkır**, President of the 75th session of UN General Assembly, fmr Minister of European Union Affairs of Türkiye.

### Thematic Session 4: "Combating Hate Speech, Exclusion, and Discrimination: Toward an Intergenerational Dialogue"



Speakers: **H.E. Mr. Anar Karimov**, Chief, Partnerships & International Cooperation Sector, ICESCO; **Mr. Andreas Mavroyannis**, Member, UN Law Commission; Fmr Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the UN; **Ms. Francesca Hilario**, UNAOC Young Peacebuilders; **Ms. Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati**, Secretary General, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance; **Mr. Anas Almassrahy**, Urban Planner, YPL Salam for Cultural Communication; and **Ms. Maha Alabduljabbar**, Founder at Tura, YPL, Salam for Cultural Communication. Moderator: **Dr. Jamil Kabbara**, CEO, Consultant & Board Member, Fondation Ousseimi.

## Thematic Session 5: "Women at the Frontlines of Peace: A Case for Inclusive Participation of Women as a Norm, not an Exception"



Speakers: **H.E. Ms. Suzi Carla Barbosa**, Foreign Minister of Guinea Bissau (2019-2023); **H.E. Ms. Bouare Bintou Founé Samake**, President, WILDAF-Mali, Minister for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family of Mali (2020-2021); **Ms. Caddy Adzuba**, President of AFEM, President of Pelagie Muhigirwa Foundation, Democratic Republic of the Congo; **Ms. Riyam Hayder**, Policy and Advocacy Officer, Nonviolent Peaceforce; and **Ms. Samantha Rampersad**, Youth Advisor, UNFPA. Moderator: **Dr. Mohamed Elbagir Ali Elsanousi**, Executive Director, Secretariat of the Network of Religious and Traditional Peacebuilders.

## Thematic Session 6: "Harnessing Partnerships to Prevent and Counter Terrorism: A Whole-of-Society Approach"



Speakers: **H.E. Mr. Maged Abdelfattah Abdelaziz**, Ambassador and Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States to the United Nations; **Ms. Areej Al Khathlan**, Researcher and PhD candidate, the Handa Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence, University of St Andrews; **Pastor Dr. James Movel Wuye**, Co-Director, Interfaith Mediation Centre; and **Imam Muhammad Ashafa**, Co-Director, Interfaith Mediation Centre. Moderator: **H.E. Mr. Boris Tadić**, President of the Republic of Serbia (2004-2012).

## Thematic Session 7: "The Winning Game: How Sports Shape Dialogue and Mutual Respect"



Speakers: **Dr. Elhalil M. Binebine**, Moroccan Businessman and Entrepreneur; **Ms. Monserrat Jiménez**, Deputy Secretary General, CONMEBOL; **Mr. Taha Ayhan**, President, Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation (ICYF); **Mr. Lidesh Jungly**, Head of Cultures, Arts and Heritage at the Grand River South East Youth Circle; and **Ms. Leila Benabdallah**, ICSO Youth Peace Ambassador. Moderator: **Mr. Alessandro Girola**, Chief, Programming and Projects, UNAOC

## Thematic Session 8: "Fostering Intercultural Dialogue, Revitalizing Heritage: Shaping Sustainable Futures"



Speakers: **H.E. Dr. Khalid M. Abalhassan**, Associate Professor of Linguistics, Imam Muhammed bin Saud Islamic University, Senior Advisor to the Minister of Education; **H.E. Mr. Fahad bin Mohammed Al-Attiyah**, Former Ambassador of the State of Qatar to the United Kingdom and to the Russian Federation; **Mr. Araz Baghirlı**, Head of Cooperation with International Developments, Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan; and **Mr. Waseem Haddad**, Senior Programme Manager - Arab Region Programme, KAICIID. Moderator: **Prof. Mike Hardy**, Chair of Intercultural Relations and founding Director of the Centre for Trust, Peace, and Social Relations at Coventry University.



Youth voices resonated throughout the **11th UNAOC Global Forum**, with **71 young alumni of UNAOC programmes from 47 countries** contributing to discussions and showcasing their impact. The Forum highlighted the power, creativity, and leadership of young people in advancing peace through intercultural and interreligious engagement.

At a time of growing global complexity and polarization, the **UNAOC Youth Forum** demonstrated that young people are not only stakeholders but key agents of change. Drawing on diverse lived experiences, participants illustrated how dialogue, empathy, and collaboration can challenge stereotypes, promote inclusion, and strengthen social cohesion.

The session reaffirmed UNAOC's long-standing commitment to amplifying youth voices and supporting youth-led initiatives, recognizing that investing in young people is essential to building more peaceful, inclusive, and resilient societies in the spirit of **#OneHumanity**. (15 December)



**H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, USG, High Representative for UNAOC and UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia**



**Mr. Ricardo Karam, Founder of Takreem Foundation, Prominent Lebanese TV Host, Public Speaker**



**H.E. Ms. Aminata Touré, Former Prime Minister and High Representative for the President of Senegal**



**Ms. Dana Podmolikova, Programme Management Specialist – Youth, UNAOC**



**Ms. Anna Pavlyuchenko, Programme Officer, Institution and Member States Relations Officer, UNAOC**



**Ms. Miriam Rubio, Programme Management Support – Senior Assistant, UNAOC**



## UNAOC Youth Forum (continued)



# Inside the 11th UNAOC Global Forum — Glimpses of the people, moments, and scenes that made the Forum memorable



## Inside the 11th UNAOC Global Forum (continued)



## Inside the 11th UNAOC Global Forum (continued)



## Bilateral Meetings on the Sidelines of the 11th UNAOC Global Forum in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

On the margins of the 11th UNAOC Global Forum in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the High Representative for UNAOC held a series of bilateral meetings with global leaders and key stakeholders to strengthen international partnerships, address critical global issues, and foster peace and cooperation.



**H.E. Mr. Walid bin Abdul Karim Al-Khuraiji**, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



**H.E. Ms. Elma Saiz Delgado**, Minister of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration of Spain



**H.E. Mr. Zeki Levent Gümrükü**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye



**H.E. Mr. Zhai Jun**, Special Envoy of the Chinese Government on the Middle East Issue



**H.E. Mr. Adil Karimli**, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan



**H.E. Musadik Masood Malik**, Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination of Pakistan



**H.E. Mr. Mohamed Ali Nafti**, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Migration and Tunisians Abroad



**H.E. Ms. Rosa Yolanda Villavicencio Mapy**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia



**H.E. Mr. Robert Abisoghomonyan**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia



**H.E. Mr. Muzaffar Madrakhimov**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan



**H.E. Mr. Kazem Gharib Abadi**, Deputy Minister for International and Legal Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran



**H.E. Mr. Periasamy Kumaran**, Vice Minister of External Affairs of India



**Mr. Kirill Logvinov**, Director of the Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



**His Virtue Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshukur Pashazade**, Chairman of the Caucasus Muslims' Board and Co-Chair of the Interreligious Council

# UK Forum on Cultural Diplomacy 2026

Under-Secretary-General Miguel Ángel Moratinos, High Representative for UNAOC and UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia, participated in the **UK Forum on Cultural Diplomacy 2026**, held at the House of Commons, where he addressed a high-level panel on "The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in International Relations".

The event was hosted by **MP Jim Shannon** and **MP Yasmin Qureshi**, and co-organized by **MP Tasmina Ahmed Sheikh OBE** and **Mark Donfried** of the Institute of Cultural Diplomacy.

"At its most effective, cultural diplomacy does not seek to persuade or project superiority. It seeks to connect. It creates space for mutual recognition, for listening as much as for expression. It allows societies to engage with one another not only as political actors, but as human communities with histories, values, and aspirations," Mr. Moratinos underscored.

"At a time when global polarization is increasing—when cultural identities are politicized and differences weaponized—cultural diplomacy can act as a stabilizing force. It can counter zero-sum narratives and remind us that coexistence is not weakness, but strength." (12 January)



In London, USG Moratinos also addressed a **Special Convening on "Collaborative Approaches to Combat Islamophobia from the United Kingdom to the United Nations"**. The event was hosted by the **All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims** in collaboration with the **UK Forum for Cultural Diplomacy** and the **British Muslim Trust**.

In his keynote address, Mr. Moratinos emphasized that there is a growing global recognition "...that Islamophobia is not only a matter of social prejudice, but a political challenge that demands coordinated policy responses—locally, nationally, and internationally."

He further underscored the need for sustained and coordinated action, stating, "Combating Islamophobia requires more than statements of concern following tragic incidents. It requires sustained, preventive, and structural action. Islamophobia rarely exists in isolation. It intersects with racism, antisemitism, xenophobia, and other forms of hatred. Addressing it effectively means building alliances across communities and political lines, grounded in shared values and shared interests. From the UK to the United Nations, collaboration is not optional—it is indispensable." (12 January)

In the framework of the **UK Forum on Cultural Diplomacy 2026**, **Ms. Nihal Saad**, Director of UNAOC, spoke at the opening segment on "**Women in Politics – Challenges and Opportunities**", held at the UK House of Lords.

"The question before us is no longer whether women belong in politics. The question is whether our political systems are prepared to evolve – so that women can exercise power not despite institutions, but through them. That is the unfinished work of women and politics. And it is work that demands not only conviction, but courage," she emphasized.

Other distinguished speakers included the **Right Honourable Baroness Manzila Uddin**, the **Honourable Tasmina Ahmed Sheikh OBE**, and **H.E. Irina Bokova**, among others. (12 January)



## High Representative's Engagements in Brussels, Belgium



UNAOC participated in the **8th Meeting of the Working Group on the Implementation of the EU Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life** in Brussels, which brought together representatives of national Jewish communities, international and civil society organisations, and high-level officials of European Institutions. Discussions focused on the current state of national strategies and action plans to combat antisemitism, Holocaust remembrance, and the growing challenges faced by Jewish communities amid rising anti-Jewish hatred and recent terrorist attacks. (14 January)



USG Moratinos attended the **Holocaust Remembrance Conference: "Remembering the past, shaping the future"**, organized by the European Commission in partnership with the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union and in cooperation with the American Jewish Committee Transatlantic Institute, B'nai B'rith International, Conference of European Rabbis, European Jewish Association, European Jewish Congress, European Jewish Community Center, European Union of Jewish Students, European Union of Progressive Judaism, Hias Europe and World Jewish Congress. (14 January)



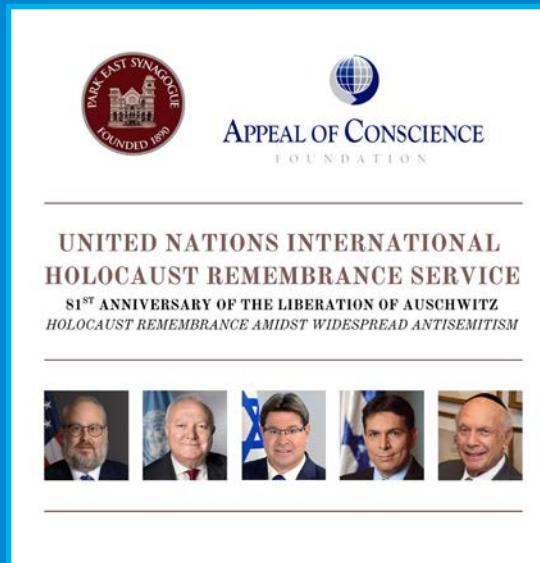
In Brussels, Mr. Moratinos had a meeting with members of **Socialistas Españoles en el Parlamento Europeo (Spanish Socialists in the European Parliament)**. They discussed the role of the United Nations and the European Union in an increasingly complex geopolitical context. (15 January)

## HIGHLIGHTS

The High Representative participated in the **United Nations International Holocaust Remembrance Service** held at **Park East Synagogue** in New York to mark the **81st anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz**. The solemn commemoration brought together senior diplomats, faith leaders, Holocaust survivors, and members of the diplomatic corps to honor the victims and reaffirm the global commitment to combating antisemitism.

The High Representative delivered remarks alongside **H.E. Ambassador Rabbi Yehuda Kaploun**, U.S. Department of State Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism; **H.E. Ofir Akunis**, Consul General of Israel in New York; **H.E. Danny Danon**, Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations; and **Rabbi Arthur Schneier**, Holocaust survivor and Senior Rabbi of Park East Synagogue.

In his address, the High Representative underscored the urgent responsibility of remembrance amid the rise of antisemitism worldwide and emphasized the importance of education, interfaith solidarity, and collective action to uphold human dignity and historical truth. "We gather not simply to recall an unspeakable human atrocity, but to reaffirm our moral obligation – to truth, dignity and vigilance," he stressed. (26 January)



The international community gathered at the **United Nations Headquarters** in New York to observe the **International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust**. The annual event, held on the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, brought together Holocaust survivors, senior UN officials, civil society, and representatives of Member States to reflect on the legacy of the Holocaust and recommit to standing against antisemitism, racism, and intolerance.

Hosted by **Ms. Melissa Fleming**, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications, the observance included testimony from Holocaust survivors alongside addresses by **H.E. Mr. António Guterres**, United Nations Secretary-General; **H.E. Ms. Annalena Baerbock**, President of the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly; **H.E. Mr. Danny Ben Yosef Danon**, Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations; **H.E. Mr. Michael G. Waltz**, Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations; **H.E. Mr. Vassily A. Nebenzia**, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations; and **H.E. Mr. James Kariuki**, Deputy Permanent Representative and Charge d'Affaires of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations. Speakers emphasized the enduring importance of remembrance as a foundation for human rights, education, and safeguarding human dignity.

In his remarks, the Secretary-General called on the international community to confront hatred and discrimination in all their forms and to ensure that the lessons of history guide efforts to build a more just and peaceful world for future generations. (27 January)



The High Representative participated in the **International Holocaust Remembrance Day Commemoration** organized by the **American Jewish Committee (AJC)** at their headquarters in New York.

In his address, Mr. Moratinos underscored, "The Holocaust stands as a permanent warning of where antisemitism, dehumanization, and especially indifference can lead when institutions fail, when hate is normalized, when unspeakable atrocities are tolerated... To remember the Holocaust is to accept a moral horizon for our institutions and ourselves. Memory must shape how we speak, how we educate, and how we act when hatred resurfaces in familiar and new forms."

Other distinguished speakers included Mr. Chaloka Beyani, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide; **H.E. Mr. Jeffrey Bartos**, U.S. Representative for UN Management and Reform; **H.E. Mr. Jonathan Miller**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations; Rabbi Andrew Baker, AJC Director of International Jewish Affairs; and Professor Rosa Freedman, Professor of Law Conflict and Global Development at the University of Reading School of Law in the UK. (27 January)



The High Representative for UNAOC participated in the **3rd African and Euro-Mediterranean Youth Summit (Sommet des Jeunes Africains et Euroméditerranéens de l'Université Euromed de Fès)**, held at the Royal Academy of Morocco in Rabat under the overarching theme, “**Civic Responsibility and Pluralism of Values**”. The event was hosted by the **Euromed University of Fez (UEMF)**, through its United Nations Chair for the Alliance of Civilizations (UNCAC), in cooperation with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC).

Organized by students of the **Euromed University of Fez** and supported by leading national and international institutions, including the **Royal Academy of Morocco** and the **Hassan II Academy of Sciences and Techniques**, the Summit convened young leaders from more than 40 countries, as well as academics, experts, and institutional leaders. Participants engaged in high-level dialogue on civic responsibility, diversity, social cohesion, and shared values.

USG Moratinos addressed the opening session, alongside **Mr. Abdeljalil Lahjomri**, Permanent Secretary of the Academy of the Kingdom of Morocco; **Mr. Omar Fassi Fihri**, Permanent Secretary of the Hassan II Academy of Sciences and Technology; Professor **Mostapha Bousmina**, President of the EuroMed University of Fez; and **Professor Abdelhak Azzouzi**, President of UNCAC, member of the Board of Directors of UEMF. (19 January)

The High Representative was the keynote speaker in a virtual event titled “**UN at Your Doorstep: Global Dialogue on Peace and Security**”, organized by the **Sustainable Development Solutions Network, Ages of Globalization, the Global Schools Program, and Compass Education**. He was joined by **Professor Jeffrey Sachs**, Economist and President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, who also delivered a keynote address, along with distinguished youth and civil society speakers.

The event featured an interactive dialogue among global leaders, youth researchers, and peacebuilders from around the world, focusing on the vital role of peace and security as foundations for human dignity and sustainable development. (28 January)



The High Representative took part in a roundtable titled “**Interreligious Approaches for Peaceful Coexistence**”, marking the first commemoration of the **International Day of Peaceful Coexistence**. The event was hosted by the **Permanent Mission of Austria** to the United Nations in New York and organized by the **International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID)**.

The High Representative delivered a keynote address following opening remarks by **H.E. Mr. Gregor W. Koessler**, a Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations, and **H.E. Ambassador António de Almeida Ribeiro**, Acting Secretary-General of KAICIID. Speakers highlighted the role of interreligious cooperation in promoting social cohesion, preventing violence, and strengthening respect for diversity. (27 January)



On the first **International Day of Peaceful Coexistence**, observed on 28 January, Under-Secretary-General Miguel Ángel Moratinos, High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) and UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia, called on the global community to embrace peaceful coexistence as both a moral choice and a shared responsibility.

In his UN Chronicle article, he stressed that peace is far more than the absence of conflict; it is an active, collective endeavour that requires us to move beyond tolerance to genuine mutual respect and understanding.

Read the full article here: <https://www.un.org/en/un-chronicle/peaceful-coexistence-moral-choice-%E2%80%93-and-shared-responsibility>



*"In today's global context, when our world often feels divided, the courage and creativity of these young filmmakers offer hope. They remind us that diversity is not a weakness, but a strength, and that human dignity must remain at the center of our collective efforts."*

**H.E. Miguel Ángel Moratinos,**  
Under-Secretary-General, High Representative for UNAOC and UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia



UNAOC announced the recipients of the **2025 PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival** during a ceremony held in the framework of its **11th Global Forum in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. This year's edition honoured **32 films from 24 countries**, celebrating the creativity and talent of young filmmakers worldwide.

The selected works were created by young creators from Angola, Azerbaijan, the Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, El Salvador, France, India, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Singapore, Spain, the State of Palestine, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Together, these films highlight the vital role of young people in fostering dialogue and addressing global challenges.



Filmmaker, Scriptw



*The ceremony included a brief Q&A with two members of the International Jury, **Mr. Carlos Smith Rovira**, Academic Director at LCI Veritas University, and **Mr. Sam Lahoud**, Founder and President of Beirut Film Society, who reflected on their experience reviewing the shortlist and the significance of youth storytelling.*



**Mr. Doğan Aşık**, Strategic Partnerships Consultant, UNAOC; and **Mr. Carlos Fernández**, Project Management Support Senior Assistant, UNAOC; served as the Masters of Ceremony of #PLURALplus25



To learn more about the PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival, please visit: <https://pluralplus.unaoc.org>.

International Jury distinctions were conferred to:

- **"Black and White"** by Kovsar Gurban (Azerbaijan), PLURAL+ 2025 International Jury Recognition, Up to 12 Years Old Category
- **"The Voice No One Used to Hear - Social Inclusion, Diversity, and Bullying"** by Eneide Germano (Angola), PLURAL+ 2025 International Jury Recognition, 13 to 17 Years Old Category
- **"Small Courage to Change"** by Eunkyo Choi (Republic of Korea), PLURAL+ 2025 International Jury Recognition, 18 to 25 Years Old Category.
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Special recognitions were conferred to:

- **"Resilience"** by Catherine Adrienne Oliveira (France), PLURAL+ 2025 Special Recognition for Combating Xenophobia and Discrimination,
- **"The Last Shall Be the First"** by Alejandra Ortiz de la Luz, Axel Daniel Farfán Concepción, Abdiel Rodas González, Ricardo Alan Ronquillo Xicali, Eduardo Ehécatl Flores Amaya, Emanuel López Burgos, Tamara González Mendoza, and Jesús Sánchez Vizcaya (Mexico), PLURAL+ 2025 Special Recognition for Responsible Narratives on Migration.

In addition, a compilation of films selected by 21 PLURAL+ partner organizations was screened during the ceremony, reflecting the vast network of media, cultural, and educational institutions that support the PLURAL+ initiative.

A flagship UNAOC programme, the PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival continues to amplify young voices and their contributions to advance dialogue on migration, diversity and social inclusion through creativity and storytelling.

## PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

UNAOC and BMW Group, with the support of Accenture, successfully concluded the 9th edition of the **Intercultural Innovation Hub (IIH)**. Ten outstanding grassroots organizations – which were honoured in the IIH Ceremony in the framework of the 10th UNAOC Global Forum in Cascais, Portugal in 2024 – completed the comprehensive capacity-building programme while scaling up innovative initiatives that promote intercultural dialogue and foster diverse and inclusive communities. The latest cohort joins a robust alumni network of 81 organizations that remain committed to advancing the mission and vision of UNAOC.



As part of their joint “**News Generation Against Hate**” initiative, UNAOC and the municipality of La Courneuve, France hosted a showcase event for youth participants, facilitators, and guests. Featuring highlights from the programme’s workshops, followed by an interactive audience Q&A, the event marks the culmination of the third edition of the programme, which was launched in 2020. USG Moratinos, High Representative of UNAOC, and Mr. Gilles Poux, Mayor of La Courneuve, conferred certificates of achievement to the youth for their participation in the “News Generation Against Hate”. (30 January)



UNAOC and Fundación Mujeres por África organized a new workshop for participants of their joint “**Women’s Alliance for Peace (WA4P)**” initiative. WA4P aims to strengthen the role of women as negotiators, mediators, and peacemakers, particularly in contexts with sociocultural and religious dimensions. The session – which brought together grassroots and high-level leaders from countries such as Mali, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of Congo – focused on managing emotions in mediation processes, underscoring the challenges mediators face in difficult and complex conflict settings, and the impact of emotional dynamics on trust-building, effective dialogue, and conflict resolution. (28 January)



## Young Peacebuilders from the South Caucasus and Central Asia Edition Spotlighted the Power of Peacebuilding at the UNAOC Youth Forum



*“We are not just participants of peace, but shapers of peace.”*

Ms. Shahim Afandiyeva,  
UNAOC Young Peacebuilder from Azerbaijan



At the **11th UNAOC Global Forum**, young leaders proved that peacebuilding is not just theory, it is practice. It is real. It has faces, voices, and names.

Three young alumni of the UNAOC Young Peacebuilders programme – **Ana Kuprava** from Georgia, **Maria Yesayan** from Armenia, and **Shahim Afandiyeva** from Azerbaijan – showed what peacebuilding looks like in action.

It was through the UNAOC Young Peacebuilders programme that they shared a space for dialogue, one where youth could listen, speak openly, and collaborate beyond borders. What began as dialogue became action: joint initiatives, peer education, and honest conversations on identity, gender equality, extremism, and coexistence. (15 December)