



UNAOC
United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

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Media and Information Literacy: *Educational Strategies for the Prevention of Violent Extremism*

February 9, 2017 | 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm | Conference Room 1, UNHQ

Media and Information Literacy: *Educational Strategies for the Prevention of Violent Extremism*

Media and Information Literacy (MIL) are formal and informal pedagogical practices that aim at developing critical thinking skills applied to media messages. Rather than censoring media that is potentially harmful, MIL invests in a long-term strategy that aims to promote the development of discerning critical thinking skills in individuals. Skills that, in fact, protect and enrich the worldviews of these individuals. At the same time it promotes a culture of peace and understanding among individuals from different cultural and religious backgrounds by using skills to “unlearn” false assumptions and to forestall extremism and the violence it can trigger.

The event will also be an occasion for the presentation of the most recent UNAOC-UNESCO-NORDICOM publication “Opportunities for Media and Information Literacy in the Middle East and North Africa”.

This discussion is the first in a series of the “Prevention Forum” launched within the “Unlearning Intolerance” programme managed by the United Nations Academic Impact.

AGENDA 9 February, 2017 / 3:00 to 6:00 pm / UNHQ CR1

3:00-3:30 pm Opening Remarks

Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser [@UNAOC](#)
High Representative for the
United Nations
Alliance of Civilizations

Cristina Gallach [@cristinagallach](#)
United Nations
Under-Secretary-General
for Communications and Public Information

3:30-4:00 pm Keynote speaker

Renee Hobbs [@reneehobbs](#)
Professor of Communication Studies, University of Rhode Island, USA

4:00-5:30 pm Panel Discussion

Amb. Hahn Choonghee [@chhahn85](#)
Deputy Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Korea to the United Nations

Guy Berger [@guyberger](#)
Director, Freedom of Expression and
Media Development, UNESCO

Regina de Assis
Former Secretary of Education, Rio de
Janeiro, Ministry of Education (Brazil)

Liam Hackett [@DiageoLiam](#) [@DitchtheLabel](#)
Founder, Ditch the Label (UK)

Magda Abu-Fadil [@MagdaAbuFadil](#)
Director, Media Unlimited (Lebanon)

Moderator: Jordi Torrent [@nycjordi](#)
Project Manager,
Media Literacy Initiatives, UNAOC

5:30-6:00 Q & A

SPEAKERS



Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser
*High Representative for the
United Nations Alliance of Civilizations*

H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser assumed his position as the UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations on 1 March 2013. Throughout his career, he has contributed to advancing the multilateral agenda in the realms of peace and security, sustainable development and South-South cooperation. Prior to that, Mr. Al Nasser held the position of President of the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly from 2011 to 2012. His career as a diplomat spans for more than three decades. Since 1998, he has represented Qatar in the United Nations and has worked on core issues such as security, terrorism, poverty, hunger and natural disasters. Mr. Al-Nasser has received numerous awards and honorary doctorates from various countries and universities for his work on fostering cross-cultural understanding.



Renee Hobbs (Keynote Speaker)
*Professor of Communication Studies,
University of Rhode Island*

Renee Hobbs is Professor of Communication at the University of Rhode Island's Harrington School of Communication and Media, where she direct the Media Education Lab, whose mission is devoted to advancing research and community service in media literacy education. She is the founding co-editor of the Journal of Media Literacy Education, the open-access, peer-reviewed journal of the National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE). She is the author of six books, more than 150 scholarly and professional articles, and has created award-winning educational multimedia including Mind Over Media: Analyzing Contemporary Propaganda. She earned an Ed.D. from Harvard Graduate School of Education in Human Development, an MA in Communication and a BA in English Literature and Film/Video Studies from the University of Michigan.



Guy Berger
*Director, Freedom of Expression
and Media Development, UNESCO*

Guy Berger is UNESCO's director for Freedom of Expression and Media Development, based in Paris. He oversees the Organisation's programmes that promote press freedom and freedom of information, safety of journalists, and empowerment of people through Media and Information Literacy. He has presented on the subject of media and the Prevention of Violent Extremism at various fora including the European Parliament and the Internet Governance Forum. Prior to joining UNESCO, Dr. Berger was the head of the School of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University, South Africa, from 1994 to 2010. He has worked extensively in the press and television, serving as the deputy Chair of the South African National Editors Forum in 2003-2004.



Magda Abu-Fadil
*Journalist and Commentator,
Director, Media Unlimited*

Magda Abu-Fadil is the director of Media Unlimited. Prior to that, she was a foreign correspondent and editor with international news organizations such as Agence France Presse and United Press International. She headed the Journalism Training Program at the American University of Beirut, which she founded. She wrote for Arab dailies Ashraq Al-Awsat and Al Riyadh, Washington-based Defense News, was Washington bureau chief of Events magazine, and was Washington correspondent for London-based The Middle East magazine. Magda Abu-Fadil conducts seminars and workshops for journalists across the Arab world, consults on media education programs, speaks at international conferences, and blogs for the Huffington Post.



Jordi Torrent (Moderator)
*Project Manager, Media Literacy Initiatives,
United Nations Alliance of Civilizations*

Jordi studied Philosophy at the University of Barcelona and followed graduate studies on Anthropology and Cinema at the Sorbonne University, Paris. He was Media Educator Consultant for the Department of Education of New York City from 1990 to 2007, where he developed Media Literacy Education programs for students, educators and parents. In 2004 he co-founded "Overseas Conversations", an annual series of international conferences in New York focusing on youth, media and education. He has co-edited, among other publications, "Mapping Media Education Policies in the World", "Youth Media Visions: Conversations Across Cultures" and "New Opportunities for Media and Information Literacy in the MENA Region." Since 2007, Mr. Torrent is Project Manager of Media and Information Literacy initiatives at UNAOC.



Cristina Gallach
*United Nations Under-Secretary-General for
Communications & Public Information*

Before joining the UN, Ms. Gallach served as Head of the Public Relations Unit in the Council of the European Union, Directorate General for Information and Communication, Brussels. In that role she was responsible for designing and implementing the EU Council's communication strategies and for its public relations and outreach to key partners, including opinion-makers, civil society and academia. Prior to that, Ms. Gallach was Spokesperson of the Spanish Government for the European Union rotating Presidency (2010); Spokesperson and Chief Media Advisor of the European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (1999-2009); and Deputy Spokesperson of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Chief Media Adviser for the Secretary-General (1996-1999).



Ambassador Hahn Choonghee
*Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic
of Korea to the United Nations*

Since 2014, Hahn Choong-hee has been Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations in New York. Ambassador Hahn's major positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs include Director-General for Cultural Affairs (2012-2014), Sous-sherpa and Spokesman for the 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summit (2011-2012), Director-General for Human Resources (2010), and Deputy Director-General for North Korean Nuclear Affairs (2007-2008). He also served at the Korean Embassy in Washington, D.C. (1991-1994), Lagos (1994-1996), Vienna (1999-2002), and Paris (2008-2010). Ambassador Hahn received an M.A. in international relations from the University of Pennsylvania, a B.A. in French from Seoul National University and studied at University of Paris I (Pantheon-Sorbonne) in its training program.



Regina de Assis
*Former Secretary of Education, Rio de
Janeiro, Ministry of Education (Brazil)*

Regina de Assis is the National Secretary of Brazil's Ministry of Education for the Secretariat of Educational Articulation with States and Municipalities. She was a former member of Brazil's National Council of Education as well as the former President of MultiRio, a Rio de Janeiro's educational multimedia organization working closely with the city's public education system. She paid particular attention to youth living in violent neighborhoods. Dr. de Assis is also the author of several books about media and education as well as of many articles dealing with questions related to children and adolescents and the processes of education, mediated by audiovisual, digital and printed media.



Liam Hackett
Founder, Ditch the Label (UK)

Liam Hackett is the Founder and CEO of Ditch the Label; one of the largest anti-bullying charities in the world. In the UK, he sits on the advisory board of the Anti-Bullying Alliance and the Growing Up Digital task force led by The Children's Commissioner for England. He has given evidence in Parliament and consulted to governmental agencies, launched groundbreaking research reports in The House of Commons and represented Ditch the Label in The White House in 2016. Ditch the Label's digital support team mentors and empowers individuals to overcome bullying through our website and in partnership with other online communities. In addition, Ditch the Label produces pioneering research to understand the changing nature and trends of bullying. Sharing the findings with educators, charities and the public sector.

For further information on initiatives as well as access to publications and resources relevant to Media and Information Literacy, please visit the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) website:

www.unaoc.org/media-information-literacy

About the Organizers



The **United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)** is a political initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General. Established in 2005, UNAOC is co-sponsored by the Governments of Spain and Turkey. On March 1st, 2013 Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser assumed the leadership of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations as High Representative. Prior to his current position, Mr. Al-Nasser was the President of the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The Alliance benefits from the political support of the Group of Friends, a community of countries and international organizations, which actively promotes the objectives and work of the Alliance at the global, regional and local levels. The Group is a driving force of UNAOC and plays a vital role in the Alliance's strategic planning and implementation process. Through a broad dialogue-based and consensus-building approach, the UNAOC High Representative seeks the input, advice and support of the Group of Friends' members on all key aspects of the Alliance's activities and mandate. UNAOC Group of Friends currently includes 145 Members of which are 119 UN Member States and 26 international organizations. They represent all continents, societies and cultures.

A High-Level Group of experts was formed by the UN Secretary-General to explore the roots of polarization between societies and cultures and to recommend a practical programme of action to address this issue. In its 2006 report, the High-Level Group identified four priority areas for action namely, Education, Youth, Migration, and Media. UNAOC project activities are fashioned around these four areas, which play a critical role in helping to reduce cross-cultural tensions and to build bridges between communities.

In this context, UNAOC launched on 25 December 2015 the #SpreadNoHate initiative, which aims at countering xenophobia, racism and narratives of hatred in the media. The previous Symposium on "Combating xenophobic language in the media and fostering inclusive integration of migrants and refugees" was organized under the framework of the #SpreadNoHate initiative on 15 September 2016. This Symposium was held in the margins of the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly in preparation of the September 19th Summit to Address Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants, and in line with the Secretary-General's "Together campaign" to counter racism and xenophobia towards refugees and migrant, to which UNAOC is actively participating as a member of the SG's working group.

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The **United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI)** is an initiative that aligns institutions of higher education with the United Nations in actively supporting, and contributing to the realisation of, universally accepted principles in human rights, literacy, sustainability and conflict resolution.

Some thirty international networks of universities and other institutes of higher education and research have endorsed UNAI and encouraged their members to join. Nearly a thousand individual institutions have done so, representing a global diversity of regions and a thematic wealth of disciplines.

We seek affiliation from two types of institutions: Those which already have courses in, or undertake research on, the United Nations system. Such studies are usually located in schools or centres dealing with international affairs, political science or history.

Second, is the spectrum of institutions whose programmes may not immediately suggest a United Nations link, but whose scholarship and experience has a direct relevance on what we, as an Organization and system, are working to achieve. For example, schools of medicine can have bearing in our work in health-care; and study in architecture for instance, can lead to innovative models for swift, economical housing in the wake of natural disasters.

Every subject and discipline can have a UN imprint. We want relevant institutions to recognize this link and, often without additional effort or expense, undertake activities that can directly support United Nations mandates and objectives. These activities in the past have included events such as panel discussions, student workshops and forums.

More details, including the ten underlying principles of UNAI and the list of current membership can be viewed at <https://academicimpact.un.org>.

There is no cost or fee for joining UNAI. The sole responsibility is for each member institution to actively demonstrate support of at least one of those principles each year. It is our hope that this support can find reflection in the United Nations' own policies and programmes, allowing for a sharing of experiences and effective practices as well as the infusion of scholarship to the realisation of social, economic and political objectives.