

NEWS FLASH 📅 July 2020
#OneHumanity amid COVID-19

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*One humanity.
Many cultures.*

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

730 Third Avenue, 20th Floor,
New York, New York 10017

☎ Phone: +1-929-274-6217

📠 Fax: +1-929-274-6233

✉ Email: contactaoc@unops.org

HIGHLIGHTS



#UNAOCturns15



Miguel Ángel Moratinos
@MiguelMoratinos



Today, @UNAOC turns 15. Our work is far from being done. We should not lose sight of our common humanity and shared values. We continue to work to fulfill our motto: "Many cultures. One Humanity." #UNAOCturns15 #OneHumanity #UNAOC

10:35 AM · Jul 14, 2020 ·

UNAOC celebrated its fifteenth anniversary! On 14 July 2005, the Alliance of Civilizations was indeed created as a special initiative of the UN Secretary-General to promote cultural diversity, religious pluralism, and mutual respect. (14 July)

In a statement marking the occasion, Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, High Representative for UNAOC, stated:

"Our work is far from being done. Amid the current crisis, we need to work even harder towards building bridges between cultures and civilizations and to strengthen dialogue and understanding as the basis for cohesive, resilient, and inclusive societies. We have to win the battle of ideas."

On the margins of the **UN Virtual Counter-Terrorism Week**, the High Representative for UNAOC participated in an interactive session entitled **"Prevention of Violent Extremism & Strengthening Social Cohesion: Investing in Youth-Led and Youth-Driven Initiatives to Build Resilient Societies,"** convened by the **UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT)**.

Speakers discussed how the international community can rise to the new challenges in the counter-terrorism landscape, especially in the context of the global pandemic. "It's time to expand the space for youth and provide them with a safe environment to galvanize their power and abilities to make a change," Mr. Moratinos stated. (9 July)



Youth Meet-Up

8-10 July 2020 **ONLINE EVENT**

→ THURSDAY 9 JULY | 1:30-2:30 PM (CET)

How can youth build
peace and prevent
violent extremism
and exclusion in a
post-COVID context?



→ PEACE & SECURITY



Youth Meet-Up

8-10 July 2020 **ONLINE EVENT**

The High Representative for UNAOC was a panelist in a “**Youth Meet-Up**” of the **European Union and the African Union**, focusing on the role of youth in peacebuilding and the prevention of conflict and radicalization. Mr. Moratinos shared his views on ways youth can contribute to preventing violent extremism in a post-COVID-19 world. “One of today’s main challenges is uncertainty, but young people have to remain hopeful and work to have their voices heard,” he said. Participants in the session included EU and AU youth activists and professionals, including Ms. Erin Saltman, Head of Counterterrorism and Dangerous Organisation Policy for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa at Facebook. (9 July)

UNAOC co-hosted with the **Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers**, more than **60 young Interfaith Fellows of the European Union-funded SEA-AIR Project**. The High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos and UNAOC project managers participated in the virtual discussion entitled, “**Understanding UN Plans of Action for Religious and Traditional Actors**”. The discussions focused on the essential role of religious leaders in society, especially amid the current health crisis. UNAOC staff presented their interreligious and intercultural programming, as well as the UN Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites. “Never has the capacity to mobilize and change the world been as possible as today. Youth can bring about that change and constitutes the One Humanity who has to prevail,” Mr. Moratinos said. (2 July)



Press Statement on Combating Antisemitism

The High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), Mr. Miguel Moratinos, **expressed his dismay at the antisemitic views expressed by a senior member of the Board of Trustees of the charity organization Islamic Relief.**

In his capacity as the **United Nations Focal Point designated by the United Nations Secretary-General to monitor antisemitism and enhance a system-wide response**, the High Representative unequivocally condemned such actions and reiterated that the United Nations is fully engaged in combating antisemitism as well as all forms of discrimination and intolerance based on religion or belief. (July 28)

Ahead of the **G20 Interfaith Forum** planned for October, in partnership with the **G20 Interfaith Forum Association, KA-ICIID, and Saudi Arabia's National Committee for Interfaith and Intercultural Dialogue**, organized a virtual consultation for prominent policymakers from the Arab region, religious leaders, social cohesion experts, and environmental specialists to speak about the promotion of peaceful coexistence in the Arab Region, and the role of religious institutions in the areas of governance and faith. This virtual discussion was part of a series of consultations to help shape a final set of recommendations to world leaders attending the G20 Interfaith Forum. (3 July)



ATLÉTICO DE MADRID PARTNERS WITH UNAOC IN PROMOTING ITS MISSION

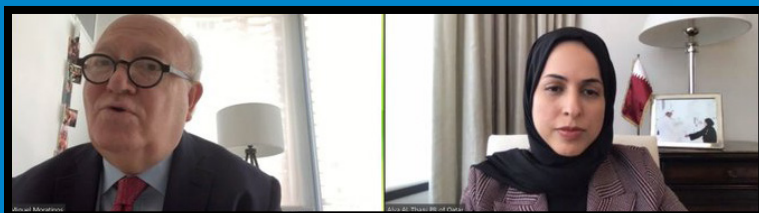


Check out Fundación Atlético de Madrid's #OneHumanity video on solidarity.unaoc.org

UNAOC and **Fundación Atlético de Madrid** announced that they are joining forces to amplify **UNAOC's #OneHumanity campaign**, which aims to battle all forms of discrimination and foster respect for all. Together, the two organizations committed to standing up against racial discrimination, xenophobia, and culturally-based conflicts by highlighting respect and collaboration amongst different nations and cultures. (9 July)



"It is an absolute honour for our Foundation to take part in the Alliance of Civilizations, which will give us the chance to promote the fundamental values in our mission with different projects and actions."
-Mr. Enrique Cerezo, President, Fundación Atlético de Madrid



The High Representative for UNAOC met virtually with **H.E. Ms. Alya Ahmed Saif Al Thani, the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations**. They discussed current and future UNAOC projects and explored areas of collaboration and synergy. (10 July)

UNAOC, in partnership with the **UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT)**, the **UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)**, and the **International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS)** convened an International Expert Group Meeting on **"The Impact of Covid-19 on the Security of Major Sporting Events."**

High-level representatives and leading experts from the fields of sport, security, and health exchanged views on the challenges caused by the pandemic on major sporting events and agreed on the urgent need to develop comprehensive preventive measures. The virtual event was the second meeting held under the framework of the UN Global Programme on Security of Major Sporting Events, and Promotion of Sport and Its Values as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism, led by UNOCT in partnership with UNAOC, UNICRI, and ICSS. (16 July)





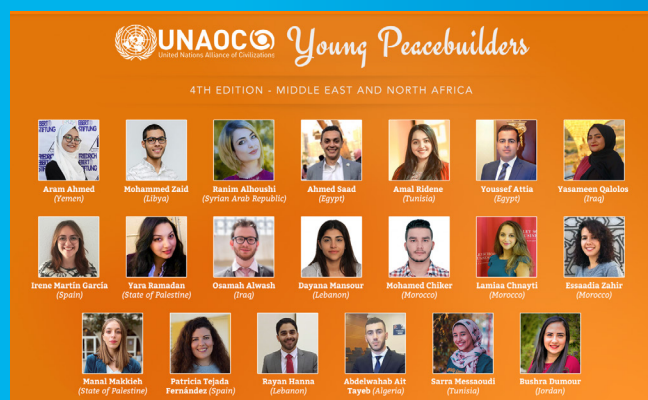
UNAOC organized a **capacity-building webinar** as part of its joint initiative with **BMW Group**, the **Intercultural Innovation Award (IIA)**, in partnership with **Accenture**. Current IIA recipients received training in **"Organizational Sustainability and Growth"**, allowing them to benefit from peer-learning to increase their skills and ensure their projects' continued success. (22 July)



UNAOC and the **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** are currently reviewing the **450+ videos** they received from across the globe for their joint initiative, the **PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival**. Following a competitive selection process this summer and in the fall, the winning youth filmmakers will be announced and invited to participate in the annual **PLURAL+ Awards Ceremony in late 2020**.



As a co-organizer of the **G20 Interfaith Forum**, UNAOC participated in an online consultation of the **G20 Interfaith Forum Education Task Force** and contributed to the Expert Group focusing on inclusive learning spaces. This consultation aimed to help the Task Force identify relevant educational policy recommendations for the consideration of G20 leaders. (27 July)



UNAOC organized the first virtual workshop of the hybrid second phase of the **fourth edition of its Young Peacebuilders programme**, appropriately named **"COVID's Sunny-side"**, with Young Peacebuilders from the Middle East and North Africa.

The **Young Peacebuilders programme** is a peace education initiative designed to support young people in gaining skills that can enhance their positive role in peace and security and in preventing violent conflict. (23 July)

July was an important month for the **#YouthWagingPeace** initiative, a joint project of UNAOC and the UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP).



The two organizations drummed up the mentorship phase of the young civil society leaders from South Asia, who are implementing projects that use education to prevent violent extremism, mobilizing their respective communities towards sustainable peace.

Through this youth-led bottom-up and hands-on approach, it is expected that the project will reach and impact at least a combined community of 1,000 stakeholders across six countries, namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

UNAOC's **Media and Information Literacy (MIL) clearinghouse**, developed in partnership with UNESCO, remains a unique thematic digital platform on MIL within the UN system. A record number of more than fifty resources in four different languages was shared on the MIL platform in July. For more information, visit milunesco.unaoc.org.



The **UNESCO-UNAOC UNITWIN Cooperation Programme on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue (MILID University Network)** published a response to the COVID-19 health crisis. With UNAOC and UNESCO's support, the **MILID University Network** will share its experience in research and dialogue to unite people under the cause of discerning factual information from destructive discourses to promote human solidarity, cultural diversity, and the fight against racism through MIL in these unprecedented times.



UNAOC and BMW Group organized a webinar as part of their joint initiative, the **Intercultural Innovation Award (IIA)**. IIA recipients were mentored online on a timely topic, **"Fundraising in the face of COVID-19: Donor Networking and Creating Lasting Relationships."** (7 April)



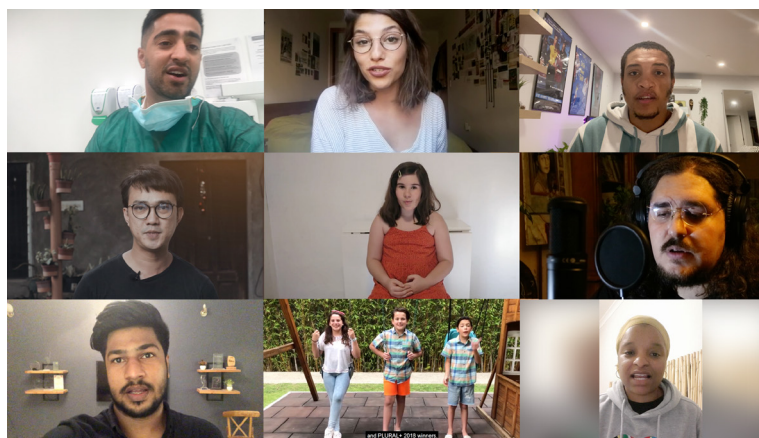
UNAOC and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), organized a webinar about their joint initiative, the **PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival**. They shared information about the 2020 edition of PLURAL+, answered questions from the many young filmmakers who participated, and shared useful tips on creating compelling video content amid the pandemic. (17 April)



On **World Creativity and Innovation Day**, UNAOC and **BMW Group** published a brand-new video to celebrate recipients of the **Intercultural Innovation Award (IIA)** and their role in leveraging creativity and innovation to promote intercultural dialogue worldwide. UNAOC and BMW Group both disseminated the video widely on social media. (21 April)



UNAOC organized two capacity-building webinars with BMW Group for recipients of the Intercultural Innovation Award, in partnership with Accenture. IIA recipients were trained in **"Public Speaking for Effective Communication"** (4 June) and **"Social Styles and Leadership"** (15 June), which provided them with tools to lead their projects effectively and develop their abilities to deliver impactful messages about the important work of their organizations.



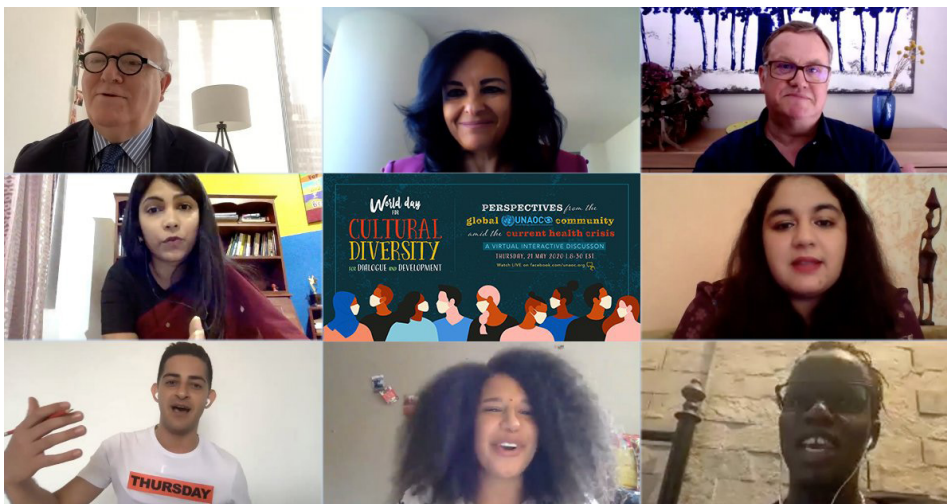
UNAOC and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) organized a **virtual "watch party"** with a selection of short films from the **PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival**, which all conveyed a message of unity against racism and all forms of discrimination.

The High Representative for UNAOC and the **Director General of IOM, H.E. Mr. António Vitorino**, participated in the event, which featured short films produced by filmmakers as young as seven years old from across the globe. (26 June)

A LOOK BACK AT UNAOC'S ONLINE PROGRAMMING ACTIVITIES (APRIL-JULY)

Marking the **World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development (A/RES/57/249)**, UNAOC invited programmes partners and alumni working in the field of intercultural dialogue to participate in a virtual discussion.

Moderated by **UNAOC Chef de Cabinet Ms. Nihal Saad**, the panel featured **Ms. Afaf Lamkoutar (Morocco)**, Legal Representative of the Hijra Legal Clinic and UNAOC Young Peacebuilder; **Ms. Yamini Ravindran (Sri Lanka)**, Director for Legal and Advocacy at the Alliance Development Trust, and recipient of the Intercultural Innovation Award; **Ms. Nicole Banister**, Founder and Commissioner of My Basketball Team, and UNAOC Fellow; and Author and Reporter **Mr. Chaker Khazaal**.



It also included representatives of **UNESCO MGIEP** and **Beach Soccer Worldwide**. Speakers shared experiences and lessons learned amid the pandemic, especially in the context of bridging the gap between various cultures. In his closing remarks, Mr. Moratinos stated, "Culture is the best antibody for mental health during the Covid-19 crisis." (21 May)



UNAOC organized an **interactive discussion with refugee students on the issue of hate speech against migrants and refugees** in traditional and new media and ways to combat it. The event was part of the interactive online conference "**Amplify Now**", organized by Kiron – Open Higher Education for Refugees, which brought together refugees, NGOs, academics, and the private sector to foster collaborative exchanges around the theme "Elevating new learning and strengthening communities". Under the scope of UNAOC's #SpreadNoHate initiative, UNAOC Fellows shared their research and perspectives concerning hate speech in small-group discussions, encouraging refugee students to identify and develop new ways of recognizing hate speech against migrants and refugees and methods to counter it. (20 June)

Outside of UNAOC's programming events, we have attended many webinars touching on an array of topics (April-July):

"**#CopingWithCOVID: A webinar series on young people and mental health**" organized by the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth (OSGEY)

"**UN Global Compact - Academy Series:**

- COVID-19 and Human Rights: Protecting the Most Vulnerable;
- New Leadership for a Global Crisis;
- Global Cooperation for Crisis Response" organized by the UN Global Compact

Virtual webinars and meetings with the **Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security (GCYPS)**, the **UN Social Media focal points** and the **UN Messengers of Peace/Goodwill Ambassadors focal points**.

"**The Global Boardroom**" by The Financial Times in Partnership with TNW:

- "Moral Money - Responsible Business in the Age of COVID-19"
- "A time for leadership and resilience – What role can business play in managing the crisis and preparing for recovery?"

"**Leading in the New Normal of a Pandemic World: An intensive dialogue between religious leaders and scholars on the intersectional nature of 'Leadership' in and beyond a time of pandemic**" organized by Religions for Peace and the Center of Theological Inquiry

"**COVID-19, Religion and Belief, Webinar Series**" organized by Spark

"**Youth and Digital Spaces: Addressing and Countering the Exploitation of the COVID-19 pandemic using Media and ICTs**" organized by the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and UNESCO.

"**International Stakeholders Active in the Field of Youth**" organized by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe.

"**Virtual launch of the Technical Guide on Preventing Violent Extremism through Sports**" organized by the UN Office of Drugs and Crime

"**H.E. Abdullah Abdullah Discusses Peace Talks in Afghanistan**" organized by the United States Institute of Peace

"**Shared Future, Shared Responsibility**" organized by the Nizami Ganjavi International Center

"**Business and Covid 19: Business Fights Poverty Briefing with McKinsey and UNDP**" organized by Business Fights Poverty

"**UN Global Compact Leaders Summit**" organized by the UN Global Compact

"**Responding to the Challenges of Stability and Peace in Libya**" organized by the Global Council for Tolerance and Peace (GCTP)



The UNAOC team continues to work remotely, advocating for humanistic values, including solidarity, compassion, fraternity, and social justice.

