



**#OneHumanity.**  
*Many cultures.*



**UNAOC**

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



# UNAOC

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

The present report reflects the main activities  
and projects carried out by the  
**United Nations Alliance of Civilizations**  
(UNAOC) between January and December 2019.

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# FOREWORD

In January 2019, I embarked on the exciting journey as new High Representative of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC). UNAOC's mission and mandate are very close to my heart. During my entire career, including in the Spanish Foreign Service, I promoted peace agreements, fostered dialogue across continents, and was part of UNAOC's creation back in 2005.

Becoming the third High Representative of UNAOC means building on remarkable achievements made by my predecessors, H.E. Mr. Jorge Sampaio of Portugal and H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser of Qatar. Both have translated the vision and recommendations of the High-Level Group from 2005-2007 into concrete steps to bring together civilizations, peoples and cultures. They have also brought UNAOC to the level of a dynamic initiative, fully recognized both within and outside of the United Nations system. I therefore have committed to ensuring continuity of its ongoing flagship programmes, which proved to be quite impactful. Reflecting on the United Nations reform process as well as new challenges posed to global peace and security, my goal is to position UNAOC as an impactful and sustainable United Nations tool for conflict prevention and conflict resolution, active in three priority areas – prevention, mediation and preventing and countering violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

I invite you to learn about UNAOC targeted programming interventions and note what was accomplished over the past twelve months. UNAOC's programming team translated the organization's objectives and goals into concrete and measurable initiatives that serve commu-

nities where UNAOC is needed the most. We aimed to achieve balance between supporting grassroots organizations and building capacities of young people at local levels in Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and Europe; deconstructing stereotypes and improving perceptions about the 'other' between MENA and EUNA regions; and giving voices to young people from around the world, condemning xenophobia, promoting inclusion of migrants and social cohesion.



*Regrettably, in recent years  
and more so in 2019, the world  
witnessed the rise of bigotry,  
xenophobia and hate speech.*



Regrettably, in recent years and more so in 2019, the world witnessed the rise of bigotry, xenophobia and hate speech. Reports and surveys have shown that stereotypes about persons on the basis of their culture, ethnicity, religion and faith, persisted and have been increasingly present in the mainstream and online media.



*H.E. Mr. António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, briefs the media together with H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), on the launch of the United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites: In Unity and Solidarity for Safe and Peaceful Worship, September 2019, United Nations Headquarters, New York*

Terrorists increasingly incited people to violence, particularly young men and women, exploiting identity narratives and opposing communities to one another. The 15 March terrorist attacks on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, which killed 50 innocent lives, shook the international community to its core. Immediately after this event, the United Nations Secretary-General mandated UNAOC to help him put together an action plan that would help prevent further attacks and guarantee the safety of religious sites and worshippers. My team has spared no effort in delivering

on such an important task. This report highlights the launch of the Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites and the work, which UNAOC conducted during the last quarter of 2019 as the United Nations entity responsible for coordinating its system-wide implementation.

Most of UNAOC's work has been carried out hand-in-hand with its broad network of partners from State and non-State sectors, including civil society, the private sector, foundations, academia, media and international organizations.

I am convinced that the only way for UNAOC and the entire United Nations system to fully realize its mandate and serve our humanity is by building on each other's expertise and involving a plethora of stakeholders.

I wish to thank each and every single donor who went beyond expressing its general support for UNAOC's mandate and financially contributed to our Trust Fund. Whether modest or generous, such contributions are, without a doubt, the best investments governments, private sector companies and individuals can make to build a better future for all.

We still have a long way to achieve inclusive, just and peaceful societies. We strive to build a world where different religions and faiths, cultures and civilizations live together peacefully and respectfully, or, as I prefer to put it, in *La Convivencia*. My priorities in 2020 and beyond will include strengthening the sustainability

of UNAOC and expanding its donor base; reviving the regional dimension of UNAOC by partnering and conducting targeted activities in Africa, South and East Asia, and Latin America; and implementing projects in the areas of sports for peace; socio-cultural mediation; promoting the role of women as peacemakers and negotiators in conflicts with an intercultural and interreligious component.

As of this writing, the pandemic of COVID-19 poses a global threat to everyone and might exacerbate hate speech and xenophobia. It will add to the need for UNAOC to reinforce its work by calling for solidarity, compassion and kindness. My team and I are more resolute than ever for UNAOC to fulfill its motto "One Humanity. Many Cultures".

Sincerely yours,  
*Miguel Ángel Moratínos*



*The High Representative for UNAOC (front and center) with youth participants in UNAOC Young Peacebuilders programme, October 2019, Merida, Spain*



## CHAPTER 1

# STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2019-2023: UNITED NATIONS POLITICAL TOOL FOR PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY



*The Plan of Action for 2019-2023 aims to put UNAOC on the path of an organization that is action-oriented and rooted in the United Nations organization, serving and supporting its priorities.*



The roadmap for UNAOC in the coming years – Plan of Action for 2019-2023 – was developed as a result of a broad consultative process with the main UNAOC stakeholders. It aims to put UNAOC on the path of an organization that is action-oriented and rooted in the United Nations organization, serving and supporting its priorities. It is based on principles of genuine inclusivity, focusing on having UNAOC cultivate cooperation with State and non-State sectors.

The Plan of Action showcases three strategic priority areas – prevention, mediation, preventing and countering violent extremism conducive to terrorism. In each of those priorities, UNAOC will implement targeted projects that will have an impact on the ground and new approaches and initiatives that are measurable and results-oriented.



*“Crucial components of an effective multilateral system are the commitment to respect, dialogue, empathy, inclusion, diversity, solidarity, dignity, multiculturalism and living together, and those are precisely the values and principles shaping my vision for this organization.”*

The High Representative for UNAOC presents the UNAOC Plan of Action 2019-2023 at the High-Level Ministerial Meeting of the Group of Friends, September 2019, United Nations Headquarters, New York



## MISSION AND VISION

UNAOC serves as a soft-power political tool of the United Nations Secretary-General for conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

UNAOC aims to improve understanding and cooperation among nations and peoples across cultures and reduce polarization at local and global levels. It helps develop more inclusive societies, in which diversity is experienced as an asset.



*H.E. Mr. António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, appointed his High Representative for UNAOC in January 2019, New York, United Nations Headquarters*

## STATUS OF THE UNITED NATIONS INITIATIVE

UNAOC was launched in July 2005 by the former United Nations Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan, as an initiative intended to respond to the need for a committed effort by the international community – both at the institutional and civil society levels – to bridge divides and overcome prejudice, misconceptions, misperceptions and polarization, which potentially threaten world peace. UNAOC co-sponsors are the Governments of Spain and Turkey. The special status and mandate of UNAOC have been recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in its Resolutions A/RES/64/14 of 10 November 2009 and A/RES/69/312 of 6 July 2015.

### PREVENTION

Preventive diplomacy continues to be the essential tool in the work of UNAOC. UNAOC addresses root causes of polarization and identity-based tensions across four pillars – **youth, media, education** and **migration**. Aiming to provide a space and a voice for women as peacemakers, UNAOC added **women** as a new pillar. It also collaborates with professionals and organizations that work in the areas of arts and sports, which serve as tools to promote multiculturalism, diversity, inclusion and social cohesion.



*“In these troubled times, the Alliance is a unique and inclusive platform for Member States, the private sector, youth, civil society and the media to exchange views and commit to dialogue and new partnerships. It is closely aligned with my own priorities and the vision that I have outlined in my prevention agenda.”*

H.E. Mr. António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, addressing the UNAOC Group of Friends at the 8th UNAOC Global Forum, November 2018, United Nations Headquarters, New York



01

STRATEGIC  
PRIORITIES  
AREA

03

### MEDIATION

UNAOC will establish a rapid task force composed of advisors on cultural and religious affairs that can be called upon to facilitate dialogue in identity-based conflict settings. UNAOC will complement the efforts of the existing departments and bodies of the United Nations system and ensure that there is no duplication or overlap.

*The High Representative for UNAOC demonstrated the added value and rationale of incorporating the socio, cultural and religious dimension in mediation processes, November 2019, Ankara, Turkey.*





## PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM CONDUCTIVE TO TERRORISM

UNAOC contributes to the implementation of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Strategy (Pillar 1). In coordination and partnership with relevant United Nations offices and entities, it will launch or co-implement new projects on the prevention of violent extremism conducive to terrorism.



"#UNAOC will work to build the capacity of young religious leaders to promote moderation and provide a counter-narrative to violent extremism" -- UNAOC High Representative Mr. [@MiguelMoratinos](#).  
#UNAOCaction



3:52 PM · Sep 27, 2019 · Twitter Web App

02

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ITY  
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### SAFEGUARDING RELIGIOUS SITES

UNAOC will coordinate the implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies and departments, as well as other stakeholders.

### INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

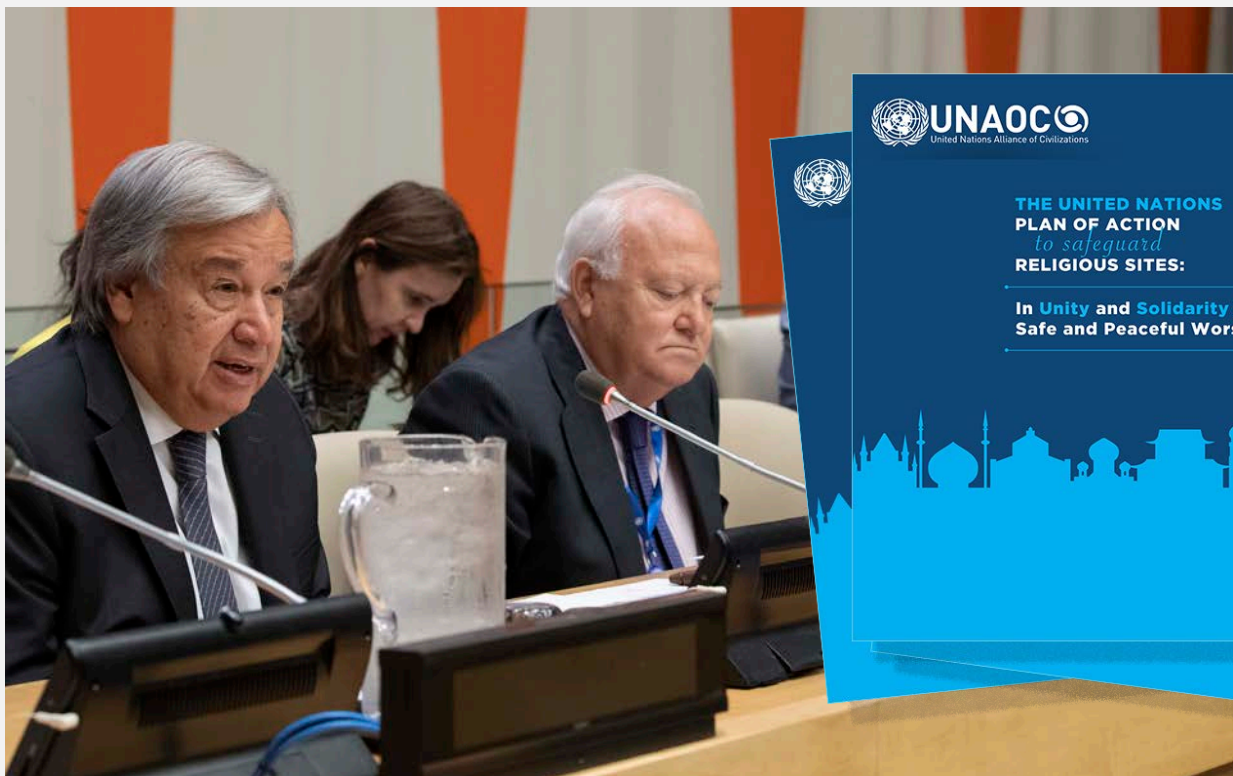
UNAOC will promote and strengthen institutional relations with key United Nations departments, bodies and agencies. It will expand membership of the Group of Friends, enhance its presence across regions and deepen cooperation with local governments and mayors. UNAOC will strengthen engagement with faith actors and religious leaders, media professionals, academics and educators, philanthropists, civil society and the private sector.

### ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS

UNAOC will form a group of goodwill ambassadors and establish a council of advisors to the High Representative. UNAOC will convene meetings enhancing regional cooperation and closer networking with governments. Together with host countries, it will convene the 9th and 10th global forums, as well as organize a series of events to mark UNAOC anniversaries. A series of communication activities will be implemented to inform the public at large about the work of the Alliance.

## CHAPTER 2

# UNITED NATIONS PLAN OF ACTION TO SAFEGUARD RELIGIOUS SITES: A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY



“

*“Together we can help prevent attacks against religious sites and do our part to secure the safety of the faithful to worship in peace. With this Plan of Action, the United Nations is taking an important step to advance that critical goal and address what has emerged as one of the leading global challenges of our era. I count on your support for this Plan, which will be led and monitored by UNAOC.”*

H.E. Mr. António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General,  
addressing member states in September 2019,  
United Nations Headquarters, New York.

”

## UN PLAN OF ACTION TO SAFEGUARD RELIGIOUS SITES

In March 2019, in the aftermath of the attacks against mosques that took place in Christchurch, New Zealand, the United Nations Secretary-General requested UNAOC to develop a plan of action for the United Nations to explore actions to prevent attacks and guarantee the sanctity of religious sites and the safety of worshippers. UNAOC has undertaken an extensive and inclusive process of consultations with all relevant stakeholders, including the United Nations system, member states, religious leaders and faith-based organizations in New York, Geneva and in capitals. The Secretary-General launched the United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites: In Unity and Solidarity for Safe and Peaceful Worship on 12 September 2019.



Miguel Ángel Moratinos  
@MiguelMoratinos

#UNSG Mr. @antonioguterres asked @UNAOC to reach out to governments and faith-based organizations, religious leaders and others to explore actions to prevent attacks and guarantee the sanctity of religious sites. #UNAOC #Commit2Dialogue #PVE #dialogue



1:11 PM · Mar 22, 2019



"We launch an important new effort to counter hate and violence around the globe" – @UN Secretary-General @antonioguterres at the launch of the UN Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites developed by #UNAOC.



António Guterres and 2 others

11:07 AM · Sep 12, 2019

The Plan is elaborated in consonance with Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is anchored in relevant United Nations General Assembly, Security Council and Human Rights Council resolutions, as well as key religious sources including the Document on "Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together", signed by His Holiness Pope Francis and His Eminence the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar in February 2019.

It provides a framework for action with specific recommendations addressed to relevant stakeholders to better prevent, prepare and respond to possible attacks against religious sites. Moreover, the Plan encourages collaboration among them to build trust, information sharing, partnerships and joint action.



## UN PLAN OF ACTION TO SAFEGUARD RELIGIOUS SITES



*Continued engagement with religious leaders included a meeting between the UNAOC High Representative and His Holiness Pope Francis in December 2019, Vatican*



*His Eminence the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Dr. Ahmed Al-Tayeb, received the High Representative to discuss the work of UNAOC, including the UN Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites, May 2019, Cairo, Egypt*



*Consultations with Sri Lankan political and religious leaders, civil society representatives, and United Nations Country Team, April 2019, Colombo, Sri Lanka*



*Consultations with religious leaders, faith-based organizations, and member states, September 2019, United Nations Headquarters, New York*

### The Plan is based upon the following principles:

- **RESPECT** for all peoples, regardless of their faith, culture and history.
- **RESPONSIBILITY** to build bridges of mutual understanding and cooperation.
- **DIVERSITY** to accept and respect the differences among human beings.
- **DIALOGUE** as a tool to better communicate and engage with one another.
- **SOLIDARITY** to support and share compassion for one another, particularly in times of sorrow or trouble.
- **STANDING TOGETHER** as one to respond with unity to attempts to divide us.
- **STAYING TOGETHER** as one to ensure that unity in response to attacks against religious sites is sustained and reinforced overtime.

## Following the launch of the Plan, UNAOC worked on two main issues:

### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE UNITED NATIONS, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF PREVENTION:

- UNAOC and the United Nations Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT) joined forces to develop a work plan for the mapping of religious sites around the world;
- A global communications campaign to engage youth and faith communities to underscore the role of individuals in the protection of religious sites, regardless of religion or belief, has been developed by UNAOC in consultation with relevant stakeholders. The campaign will be launched in 2020;
- UNAOC is working with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) on the implementation of the Global Programme to counter threats against vulnerable targets including religious sites, which aims at strengthening the capacity of member states to protect vulnerable targets from terrorist attacks

### CONSULTATIONS WITH RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS, MAINLY MEMBER STATES AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS, TO SUPPORT THEM IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO THEM:

- UNAOC held a series of consultations with member states in United Nations offices in Geneva and New York, which provided an opportunity for exchanges of national experiences related to the protection of religious sites and highlighting the importance of prevention, solidarity of the international community, education, and addressing issues related to online hate speech. Participants stressed the importance of a multi-faceted approach that could help address the complexity of the issues at stake;
- Consultations with faith-based organizations, in particular the Multi-Faith Advisory Council of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Religion and Sustainable Development, encouraged further dissemination of the Plan and the development of pedagogical tools to make it more accessible to the general public. They highlighted the role of youth and grassroots organizations in the promotion of the implementation of the Plan's recommendations.

## CHAPTER 3

# PARTNERS AND INSTITUTIONS: WORKING TOGETHER IN COMPLEMENTARITY



*Partners are central in delivering UNAOC's mandate by multiplying and amplifying the impact of its work.*



At the heart of UNAOC's work lies the notion of partnership and collaboration. UNAOC occupies a unique place within the United Nations system as a platform to bring together a constellation of partners - member states, international and regional organizations, media, youth, faith-based organizations, civil society, academia, foundations, municipalities and the private sector, - all committed to harnessing the sources of religious, cultural and ethnic diversity for peace and development. Partners are central to UNAOC in delivery of its mandate by multiplying and amplifying the impact of the UNAOC programming and advocacy efforts, providing expertise and guidance, direct funding and in-kind support, as well as local infrastructure.





INTERNATIONAL  
ORGANIZATIONS

## GROUP OF FRIENDS

Members of the **UNAOC Group of Friends (GoF)** are part of UNAOC's governance architecture. They provide guidance on key issues and strategic direction for the Alliance through bilateral consultations and GoF meetings. In 2019, Equatorial Guinea, Mauritania, Niger, Sri Lanka and Venezuela, as well as KAICIID Dialogue Center joined the Group, bringing its total membership to 152.

To articulate the strategic priorities for 2019-2023 and engage member states in the work of UNAOC, the High Representative held 60 high-level bilateral meetings in the United Nations offices in New York and Geneva, and various capitals. He conducted 45 official visits to countries in Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, North America and Sub-Saharan Africa, holding in-depth consultations on cooperation with national and local stakeholders.

152

GROUP OF FRIENDS MEMBERS

60

HIGH-LEVEL BILATERAL MEETINGS  
IN CAPITALS AND UNHQ

45

OFFICIAL VISITS TO COUNTRIES

## PARTNERS AND INSTITUTIONS

Throughout the year, consultations with capitals and diplomatic missions have occurred through written communication and numerous contacts. Members of the GoF were briefed on the UNAOC work through newsletters and other communications materials. The 27 September GoF ministerial meeting served as an occasion for membership to express their views and support to the vision of the newly appointed High Representative and the UNAOC Plan of Action 2019-2023. During the meeting, a number of countries pledged financial contributions to the UNAOC Trust Fund, while the Kingdom of Morocco put forth its proposal to host the 9th UNAOC Global Forum. The Forum will be convened for the first time in Africa since the establishment of UNAOC.

Aiming to engage stakeholders across all regions of the world, the High Representative convened a series of round tables on reviving the global dimension of UNAOC. The event gathered key stakeholders who discussed ways to promote the values and mandate of UNAOC across all regions and continents.



*“The Alliance is an organization that brings people together...building bridges between cultures, civilizations and religions. I am pleased to announce today that my country is ready to host the 9th UNAOC Forum. Morocco invites today the Group of Friends and partner-countries of the Alliance to mobilize at the highest level, so that the event brings tangible, concrete and pragmatic results.”*

H.E. Mr. Nasser Bourita, Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates of the Kingdom of Morocco, September 2019, United Nations Headquarters, New York



*The High Representative for UNAOC engages in an interactive exchange with high-level panelists from Bolivia, Egypt, Luxembourg, Serbia, Spain and Tunisia, September 2019, Yale Club, New York*

## JOINING FORCES TO DELIVER AS ONE

During 2019, UNAOC focused on deepening collaboration with a variety of **United Nations agencies and entities** on the issues of prevention of violent extremism, mediation, countering hate speech, promoting joint programming in the areas of sport for peace, youth and education. As a result, a series of joint projects and initiatives have been launched or conceptualized to commence in 2020, where UNAOC acts as a knowledge partner or as an implementing entity. UNAOC regularly liaised and coordinated its work with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT), as well as the United Nations Educational, Scientific



and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). As a knowledge partner, UNAOC contributed to the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech, developed and led by the Office of the Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide (OSAPG).

## PARTNERING WITH MUNICIPALITIES

UNAOC and the Mayor of **Los Angeles (USA)** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), exploring collaboration to promote diversity and pluralism. In a similar spirit, UNAOC and the Municipality of **La Courneuve (France)** engaged in joint efforts to promote multiculturalism and interreligious understanding at community level. La Courneuve is a multicultural city where 80 percent of the population is of foreign descent and about a third of the population is under 25 years old. It is a 'melting pot' where youth with cultural and religious backgrounds from Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia live together. Stereotypes rooted in the ignorance of 'the other', and the lack of dialogue between communities are causing tensions. UNAOC and the Mayor of La Courneuve signed an MoU, committing to promote intercultural youth exchanges, support culture as a transformative power, enhance cooperative relations among diverse people and cultures to diminish tensions across civilizations and build inclusive societies. They designed a series of workshops and activities aimed at helping young people living in La Courneuve deconstruct stereotypes affecting their communities and causing tensions.



*The High Representative signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Mayor Eric Garcetti of the City of Los Angeles, to explore joint collaborations to promote diversity and pluralism*



*The High Representative signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the French city of La Courneuve to promote multiculturalism and interfaith understanding at the community level*



### PRIVATE SECTOR



*“This collaboration and the Intercultural Innovation Award enable us to recognize some of the remarkable cross-cultural work being done worldwide.”*

*Mr. Bill McAndrews, Vice President Market Communications, BMW Group, December 2019, Madrid, Spain*

The work of UNAOC is guided by the Secretary-General’s guidelines on cooperation between the United Nations and the private sector, and by the sustainable development agenda, goal 17 on multi-stakeholder partnerships.

UNAOC and the **BMW Group** celebrated the 9th anniversary of their joint initiative, the **Intercultural Innovation Award (IIA)**. Since

2011, they have encouraged the development of innovative and impactful projects that foster intercultural dialogue and work toward a more peaceful and socially inclusive world by building mutual respect among peoples of different cultural and religious identities, rejecting violent extremism and embracing diversity.



UNAOC and **Turkish Airlines** signed a partnership agreement to collaborate on the new initiative entitled “Sports for Peace”. The initiative will highlight noteworthy sports activities that promote peace, mutual respect and inclusion, and provide capacity-building training to outstanding organizations.

*UNAOC and Turkish Airlines signed a partnership agreement in a ceremony, attended by H.E. Mr. António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, and H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey, high-level week of the general debate, September 2019, United Nations Headquarters, New York*

## CIVIL SOCIETY, ACADEMIA AND OTHER NON-STATE PARTNERS

*UNAOC and Fundación Mujeres por África signed a memorandum of understanding, November 2019, UNAOC, New York*



UNAOC continued to invest in partnerships with civil society and academia in order to build complementarity and synergies for greater impact of its programming.

In the context of the implementation of its fifth pillar, UNAOC signed a memorandum of understanding with **Fundación Mujeres por África**. Through the memorandum, they established a **Women's Alliance for Peace** that will collaborate in the implementation of projects to promote the role of women as peacemakers, mediators and negotiators in conflicts with an intercultural and interreligious component.

In 2019, UNAOC entered partnership agreements with the **Global Council for Tolerance and Peace** (United Arab Emirates), **N. Nazarbayev**

**Center for Development of Interfaith and Inter-civilizational Dialogue** (Kazakhstan) and **Pharos Arts Foundation** (Cyprus). They will join forces in building projects and conducting advocacy activities promoting the United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites; the values of tolerance, peace and security; understanding, reconciliation cultures, religious and ethnicities; fostering social inclusion; promoting interfaith and intercultural dialogue.

UNAOC collaborates with the **Higher Committee for Human Fraternity** in the implementation of the Joint Document on Human Fraternity, including ideas to promote interfaith dialogue, diversity and combatting violent extremism conducive to terrorism through the Abrahamic Family House.

Recognizing sport as a tool to foster social inclusion and cohesion, understanding and diversity, UNAOC became an associate partner of **"EYVOL" - "Empowering Youth Volunteers through Sport"** project. The two-year project was launched by an **international coalition of the Olympic Movement, the United Nations, academia and civil society**.



*H.E. Mr. António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, meets with members of the Higher Committee of Human Fraternity, December 2019, New York*

It aims at developing and implementing innovative educational methods to train youth volunteers to utilize sport to promote inter-cultural dialogue, peace and socio-economic development.

Aiming to develop partnerships with sports organizations, UNAOC embarked on collaboration with **football clubs Athletico and Barcelona**, as well as **Beach Soccer Foundation and Octagon Group**. Resulting from a series of consultations, a “One Humanity Cup” will be launched under the UNAOC umbrella.

### JOINING FORCES TOWARDS PEACEBUILDING, PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION IN CAR

UNAOC has a track record of collaborating with the **Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers**. The Network was launched in 2013 in the stewardship of a Core Group including Religions for Peace, Organization of Islamic Cooperation and Finn Church Aid (FCA). UNAOC, in partnership with the Network, FCA and KAICIID, has been supporting religious and traditional peacemakers in the Central African Republic (CAR) in their peacebuilding, peacemaking and reconciliation efforts. A series of workshops held in Bangui in November paved the way for upcoming work with national and local traditional and religious leaders, key to the transition of CAR from violent confrontations including acute interreligious tensions to peace and stability. Participants in the workshop included national leaders of muslim, catholic, protestant, and animist communities, as well as youth religious associations and grassroots faith-based organizations. UNAOC’s unique contribution focused on conflict prevention, mediation and media awareness, and it directly contributed to the establishment of a high-level interreligious dialogue workshop, in coordination with the CAR national interfaith religious platform.



Together with its partners, UNAOC facilitated the design of a two-year plan of action. This concrete outcome will serve as guidelines for UNAOC's direct contribution to promote a peaceful transition in a still very fragile national context. Next will be a mapping of local religious and traditional leaders over the CAR territory to continue working on conflict prevention and conflict resolution capacity-building efforts directed towards grass-roots actors, youth groups and women. UNAOC plans a new series of workshops along with a high-level mission to CAR in 2020.



Over the three-day roundtable discussion on **“Promoting Interreligious Dialogue for Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic”**, more than twenty religious and traditional actors developed seven specific objectives as the core of the two-year Plan of Action:

- Restore peace throughout the entire country;
- Advocate for the restoration of state authority;
- Promote socio-economic development actions;
- Create an early warning system to prevent conflict;
- Build the capacity of religious leaders and actors to promote dialogue amongst themselves;
- Advocate for the psychosocial and legal care of victims;
- Use traditional conflict resolution mechanisms to resolve conflicts between communities.

UNAOC and the **BAU Global Education** Network explored avenues of collaboration in the fields of education, global citizenship education and promotion of the culture of living together. In October, the High Representative visited Bahçeşehir University, Istanbul, and addressed the management, faculty and students on challenges and opportunities in building one humanity and the work of UNAOC.

## CHAPTER 4

# PROGRAMMING AT LOCAL AND GLOBAL LEVELS: TARGETED INTERVENTIONS FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION AND BUILDING MUTUAL RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING

2019 marked the first year to start implementing the **2019-2023 Plan of Action** and the vision articulated by the High Representative. Carried out across UNAOC pillars, initiatives and projects aim to achieve several or all of the following objectives:

- Preventing conflicts and violent tensions at a community level, combatting xenophobia, biases and stereotypes based on misperceptions of the 'other';
- Contributing to mutual respect and understanding across cultural, religious and ethnic divides;
- Supporting outstanding grassroots initiatives that serve the mandate of UNAOC;
- Raising awareness about the values of social inclusion, understanding and solidarity;
- Facilitating cross-cultural exchanges and knowledge-sharing across countries and regions;
- Sharing tools and mainstreaming lessons learned in policy frameworks at national, regional and global levels.

UNAOC's programming interventions continued to respond to the global United Nations agenda and strategies: youth, peace and security; the United Nations strategy "Youth 2030"; the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism; sustainable development goals, including global citizenship education; Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration; culture of peace; promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace.

The programming unit has been routinely collecting lessons learned, good practices and recommendations stemming from their work in various locations and presenting them in relevant policy settings and fora for replication and scaling up. Always striving to learn, improve and excel in its targeted interventions, UNAOC applied a participatory and inclusive approach throughout the cycle of every project. It mobilized knowledge and



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*UNAOC programming is driven by the paramount objective to deliver its mandate to people who will benefit from its interventions.*

”

expertise of partners and alumni to refine existing programmes and develop new projects, delivering services and support where they are needed most.

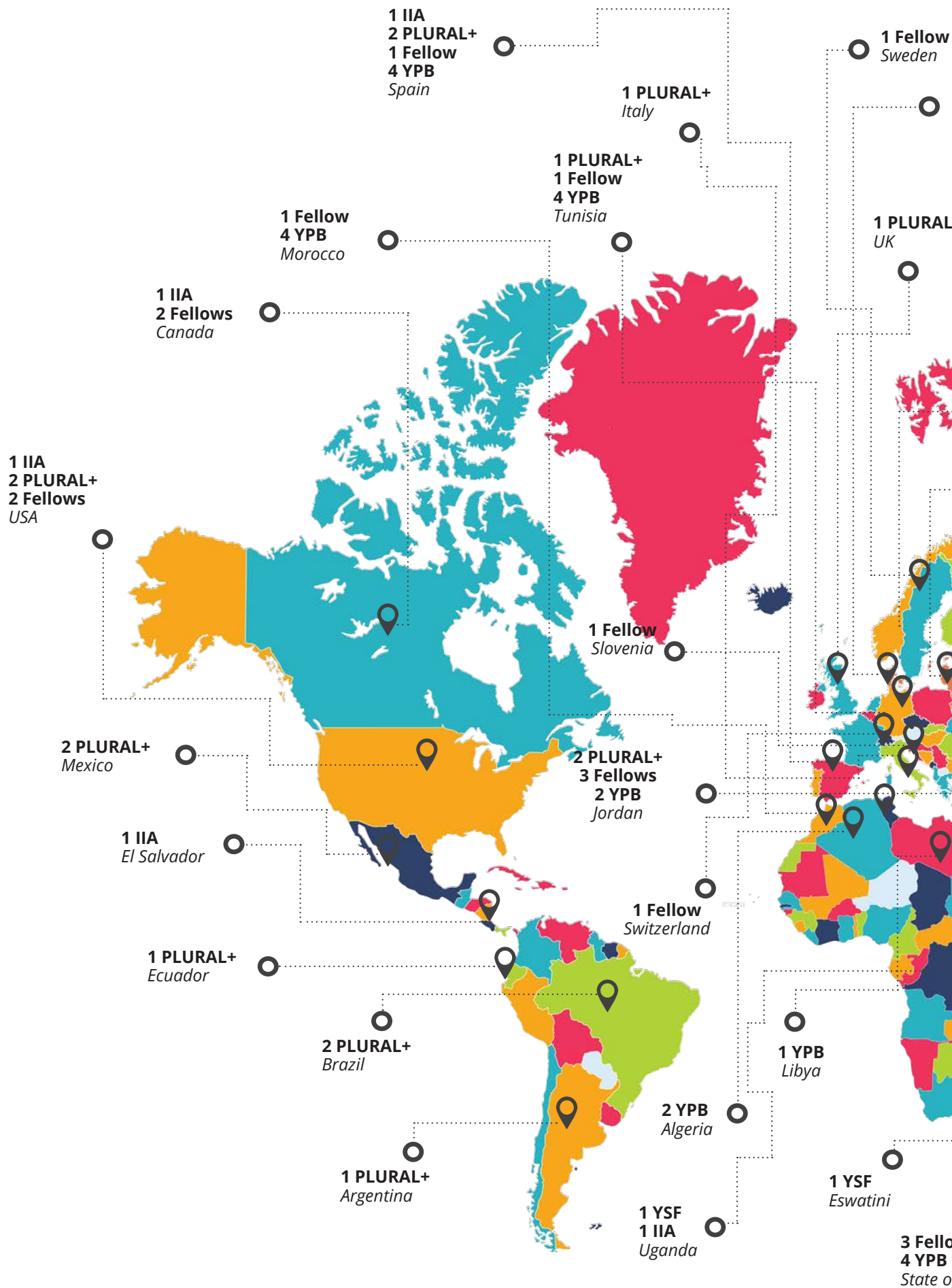
UNAOC's programming is driven by the paramount objective to deliver its mandate to people who will benefit from its interventions. Reaching to beneficiaries

in remote communities, especially where a digital divide persists, remained an ongoing challenge in 2019. Shortage of resources to deliver programmes in multiple languages, including translation of tools and capacity-building materials, is still a limitation, which UNAOC recognizes and is deeply committed to improve in the coming years.



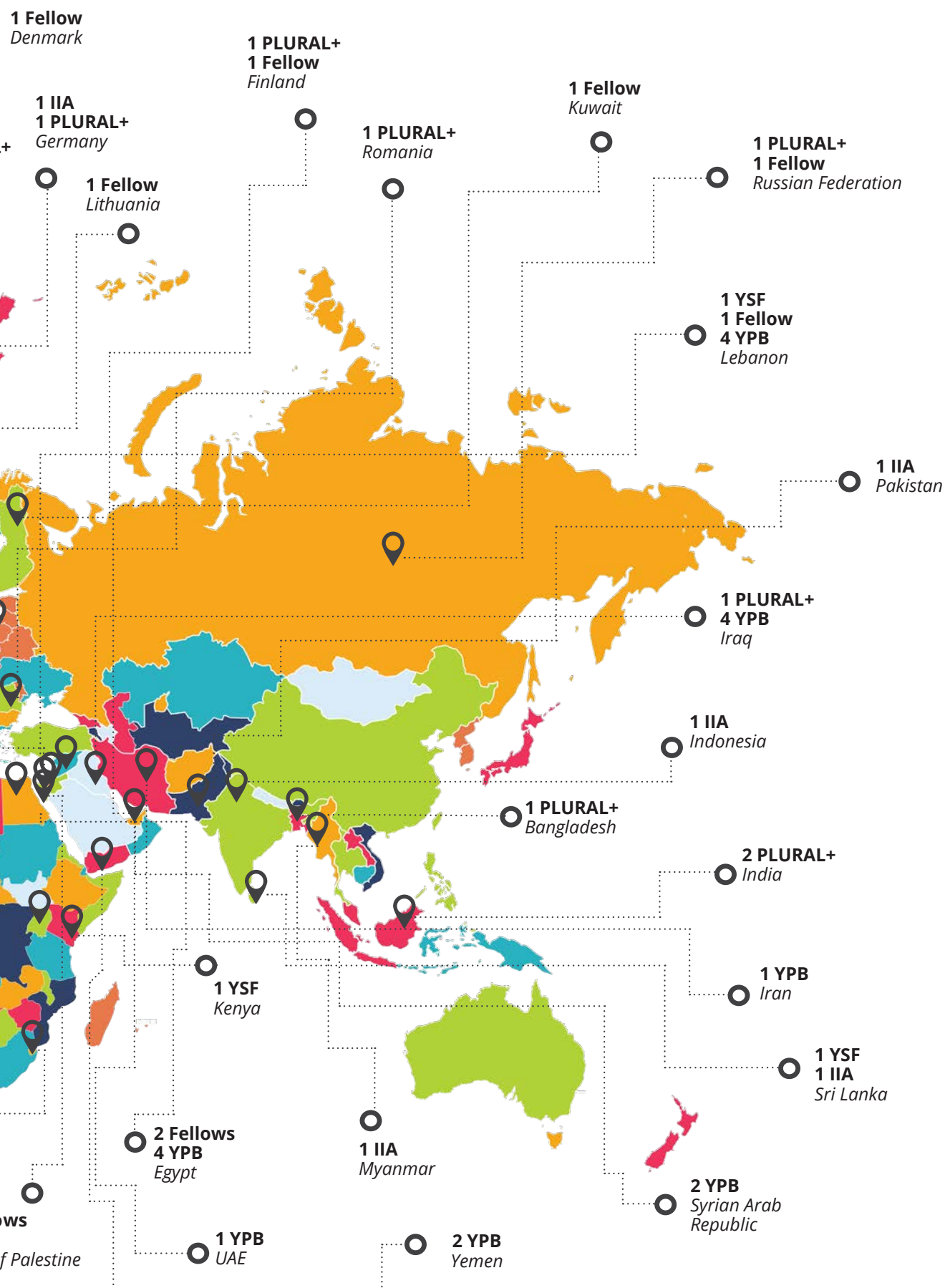
# UNAOC LOCAL AND GL

**IIA** = Intercultural Innovation Award Recipients | **YSF** = Youth Solidarity Fund Recipients | **YPB**



# GLOBAL PROGRAMMING

= Young Peacebuilders | **PLURAL+** = PLURAL+ Awardees | **Fellow** = UNAOC Fellowship Alumni





Young filmmakers screened their films and addressed United Nations representatives, youth participants and media makers in New York, United Nations headquarters, November 2019.

“

*“I realized that I could not look for acceptance from society or another person, and that this was a message that many women could benefit from. That’s what I try to convey in my film.”*

**Lina, PLURAL+ winner for “We are Enough: A Message of Girl Empowerment”  
International Jury Award, Jordan**

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## MEDIA AND MIGRATION FIELDS OF ACTION

With their joint initiative, the **PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival**, UNAOC and IOM continued to address objectives 16 and 17 of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration by empowering societies to realize full inclusion of migrants and social cohesion. PLURAL+ promotes evidence-based public discourse to improve people's perceptions of migrants. With the support of a renowned international jury, 24 young filmmakers from 18 countries were awarded by UNAOC, IOM and many partner organizations during the annual awards ceremony.

Selected for their coverage of migration, diversity and social inclusion, the winning-videos were chosen among over 1,200 submissions from almost 70 countries – a record number of entries for the festival. The top prizes went to:

- The Spanish filmmakers of ***“Seeking Refuge,”*** which follows the story of a young refugee girl as she tries to adapt to life in a new country;
- The video ***“Tags,”*** made by two high school students from Mexico, which explores the issues of discrimination and pre-conceived notions;
- The video ***“We Are Enough: A Message of Girl Empowerment,”*** produced by a young Jordanian director, which examines the expectations placed upon women and girls by society.

The UNAOC-IOM Award for the Prevention of Xenophobia was bestowed upon a young Brazilian filmmaker for his video “Brazilian, But Not Soccer Player”. The short film

addresses the issue of stereotypes against people from different cities, countries and cultures.

PLURAL+ continued to serve as a global distribution platform of youth-produced media on pressing social issues in order to foster respect for cultural diversity. UNAOC and IOM shared winning videos with the United Nations community, including the social media focal points, communications group, UN News and UN Web TV, information centers and resident coordinators, who were supportive in sharing the videos on their social media channels and within their networks. Over fifty partner organizations of PLURAL+ were also instrumental in disseminating the videos and featuring them in various events worldwide, thus reaching several hundred thousand viewers globally.

Throughout 2019, UNAOC worked with the International Labour Organization (ILO) on new versions of the **“Media-Friendly Glossary on Migration”**, first published in 2015. The Glossary will be updated and adapted to specific regions in multiple languages, to be published in 2020. The Glossary will provide support to media professionals – and the public at large – advising on the terminology to be used when reporting on migration.

MEDIA-FRIENDLY  
GLOSSARY ON MIGRATION  
Middle East Edition

قاموس مصطلحات الهجرة للإعلام  
نسخة الشرق الأوسط

### YOUTH AND EDUCATION FIELDS OF ACTION

Guided by the principle that young people are critical agents of social change, building peace, economic growth, development and technological innovation, UNAOC recognizes them as autonomous actors and partners in building more inclusive and equitable societies. It develops their capacity to foster cross-cultural dialogue and overcome stereotypes and intolerance, builds required skills, supports most promising initiatives and promotes intercultural exchanges.



*The 2019 cohort of UNAOC's Youth Solidarity Fund: Five organizations based in Africa and Asia were selected to receive seed funding of up to USD 25,000 for the purpose of implementing projects with innovative and effective approaches to intercultural dialogue and interfaith harmony.*



*“With UNAOC, we hope to build a sustainable and impactful platform together, fostering a community of young people who work for peace.”*

**Bonface, Amani Centre - YSF recipient, Kenya**



UNAOC addresses the need to provide funding to youth-led initiatives in order to better support the critical contribution that young people make to peace, development and security. The Progress Study on Youth, Peace, and Security, noted in the United Nations Security Council resolution 2419 (2018), recommended that an investment be made in youth, such that they are viewed as equal and essential partners for peace. Through its **Youth Solidarity Fund (YSF)**, UNAOC provides capacity-building support and seed funding to youth-led organizations (up to US\$25,000), allowing young people to implement conflict prevention and peace-building activities on the ground. The findings of the independent evaluation, covering the 2016-2017 YSF editions, attested to the value of YSF as a pioneering and strategic service provider to youth-led organizations.

In 2019, UNAOC selected and provided a grant to five youth-led organizations based in Africa and Asia, whose projects focus on the following issues in local communities:

- Preventing violent extremism and radicalization, and promoting social cohesion in Tana River County, Kenya, through training community radio journalists.
- Countering hateful narratives following the Easter Sunday attacks in Sri Lanka through improvisational theatre and a series of community-level peacebuilding activities.
- Creating a bridge between divided ethnicities and religions in North Bekaa, Lebanon, engaging Syrian refugees and Lebanese youth to play sports together

and participate in peer-group peace-building activities.

- Promoting religious pluralism, cultural diversity and peaceful coexistence in Eswatini through engaging young people in interfaith and intercultural boot camps held at religious centers and universities.
- Promoting interfaith relations and fostering social cohesion among youth of different religious sects in eastern Uganda.

UNAOC has partnered with Search for Common Ground to facilitate the capacity-building programme entitled “Youth 360”, involving online workshops and ongoing support from mentors. The YSF 2019 recipients have already started to benefit from the programme and will have access to it through the end of 2020. The five recipients also joined a group of 63 other youth-led organizations, alumni of YSF from previous editions, with whom UNAOC has an ongoing engagement.

- **“Umoja Mashinani”** by Amani Center (Kenya)
- **“Theatre for Peace – Connect. Create. Transform”** by Centre for Communication Training (Sri Lanka)
- **“We Play for Peace!”** by Peace of Art (Lebanon)
- **“Dismantling Religious and Cultural Stereotypes for Social Cohesion and Sustainable Peace”** by Swaziland Intent Youth Organization (Kingdom of Eswatini)
- **“Nurturing for Peace”** by Uganda Muslim Youth Development Forum (Uganda)





*The Young Peacebuilders programme contains a lot of important tools, concepts and experiences, a good collection to any young peacebuilder and activist in this field.*  
**Omar, YPB alumnus, Libya**

Aiming to empower young influential leaders and build a network of young peacebuilders, UNAOC launched the 3rd and 4th editions of **Young Peacebuilders (YPB)**, implemented with and for young people. In 2019, via open calls for applications, UNAOC selected 40 young civil society leaders (aged 18-25) from thirteen countries in the MENA region. UNAOC built their capacity and enhanced competencies on conflict transformation and conflict resolution, mediation, promotion of non-violent activism, overcoming negative stereotypes, prejudices and polarization as drivers of violent extremism conducive to terrorism. The tailor-made blended curriculum allowed programme participants to work on specific issues related to peacebuilding and prevention of conflict and radicalization in their respective communities.

The YPB 2019 participants joined the YPB network of young peacebuilders, which is

currently comprised of 80 members from 26 countries.

Under YPB, UNAOC aims to integrate young civil society leaders in peace processes and policies by enhancing peacebuilding skills, providing access to regional and global networks, and raising awareness of decision-makers. UNAOC has already noted several YPB alumni progress in that area. Examples include: Osama Aljaber from Jordan developed a mobile app on global citizenship education, which he presented to the Ministry of Culture of Jordan; Mourad Yazli from Algeria attracted funding from local organizations, including United Nations agencies and governments, to scale up his organization's training sessions on radio broadcasting for peace and reach more youth; Shadi Rouhshahbaz from Iran and her organization PeaceMentors have been assigned in 2019 to organize the Nelson Mandela International Day in Iran.

UNAOC continued to encourage exchanges and collaboration between young civil society leaders from different cultures and faiths under its **Fellowship Programme**. UNAOC provides an opportunity for emerging leaders in Europe and North America (EUNA), Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to learn more about other societies' cultures, religions and traditions in order to overcome stereotypes and challenge perceptions. Together they gain and exchange knowledge and good practices on ways to address current global issues, and benefit from opportunities to develop intercultural collaboration.

Through an open call for applications, UNAOC selected twelve fellows from the MENA and twelve fellows from the EUNA regions. It took EUNA fellows to Rabat and Casablanca, Morocco; Cairo, Egypt; and Doha, Qatar, followed by MENA fellows visiting Washington

D.C. and New York in the USA; Berlin, Germany, and Madrid, Spain. Under the overarching theme "The Role of Women in Peace-making and Conflict Prevention", UNAOC introduced young leaders to a broad range of entities and actors involved in the fields of gender, peace-building and intercultural dialogue working in international organizations, governments, faith-based organizations, academia, non-governmental and media organizations.

Upon conclusion of the exposure visits series, UNAOC measured evolution in perceptions and impact of the Fellowship Programme on its participants, including new knowledge they gained in the fields of intercultural and interreligious dialogue, gender and peace-building. It noted a significant improvement in perceptions of EUNA fellows towards the MENA region - 25% of EUNA fellows had initially a negative perception, while 90% of



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*“We all have stereotypes. Some are adopted from our families, others picked up and enforced by society. We need to challenge those stereotypes by meeting people from different countries that suffer from them and become ambassadors of inclusivity and peace in our community. I am grateful that UNAOC gave me an opportunity to come closer to this goal.”*

**Rugile, Fellowship Programme alumna, Lithuania**

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UNAOC continued to develop **media literacy initiatives** to help young people and citizens navigate an increasingly complex media world and to provide them with tools to become critical media users, an essential condition for better mutual understanding. Developed in partnership with UNESCO, the UNAOC media and information literacy (MIL) clearinghouse has become a unique thematic digital platform on media and information literacy within the United Nations system. In 2019, the MIL platform had a total of 62,169 users with 100,890 page views. The web-based version of the MIL literacy curriculum for teachers, available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russia and Spanish, continued to attract educators and researchers to be used in formal and non-formal educational settings.



## PROMOTING INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE THROUGH INNOVATION

Under the Intercultural Innovation Award (IIA), UNAOC continued to encourage the development of innovative and impactful projects by grassroots organizations that encourage intercultural dialogue and contribute to peace, prosperity and building more inclusive societies. In 2019, following a rigorous selection process, BMW Group and UNAOC identified ten initiatives, aimed at:

- Promoting religious freedom and coexistence in Sri Lanka through supporting interfaith communities and enhancing coexistence.
- Preventing extremism, discrimination and xenophobia in Germany by providing educational and counseling services to marginalized youth communities and promote a message of social inclusion and cultural diversity.
- Empowering youth through songwriting and content to reduce prejudices and promote cross-cultural understanding by contributing to discourse against racism in Canada.
- Supporting traumatized and stigmatized former child soldiers to reconcile with their war-affected communities in northern Uganda.
- Promoting peaceful religious values in Indonesia through interfaith dialogue and critical thinking courses by utilizing technology and real-life interactions, fighting against messages of hatred.





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*“IIA has impacted our organization in terms of collaboration, networking and learning some ideas that we never invested before through the network and it has really helped to improve our work.”*

***Samson, Interfaith Mediation Centre – IIA awardee, Nigeria***

- Empowering and equipping young leaders to become facilitators of intercultural dialogue in real and digital virtual communities of northern Myanmar.
- Solving conflicts, preventing violence and promoting a culture of peace in schools in El Salvador through art, education and cultural development.
- Facilitating interfaith engagement to build respect, trust and relationships necessary to combat hate, negative stereotyping and prejudice towards one another in Jewish-Muslim communities in the USA.
- Empowering interculturally innovative young change-makers from marginalized communities through art and new technologies in different locations of the Ibero-American region.
- Promoting peace, interfaith understanding and cooperation in Pakistan by empowering women to become peace ambassadors for the prevention of violent extremism.



After the award ceremony, the recipients received a financial grant to scale up their projects. Starting from January 2020, they will benefit from an ongoing capacity-building and mentorship support, which UNAOC, BMW Group and Accenture will provide to help their projects expand and become more sustainable and impactful. The awardees became part of the IIA alumni network, which currently includes 61 civil society organizations. By the end of 2019, the work of IIA alumni organizations had impacted over 3.5 million beneficiaries in 112 countries. Select participants of the network took part in an interactive learning experience, organized in April 2019. They shared experiences about their work in the field of intercultural dialogue, as well as best practices, challenges and success stories.

- **“Child Soldier Reintegration Project”**, by Grassroots Reconciliation Group (Uganda)
- **“E4D Entrepreneurs for Diversity”**, by Ventana a la Diversidad (Spain)
- **“Life Into Lyrics: Bridging Cultural Divides Through Song”**, by Darkspark (Canada)
- **“Milenial Islami”**, by Indika Foundation (Indonesia)
- **“MinorMatters: Rewind; Rebuild”** by The Alliance Development Trust (Sri Lanka)
- **“Inclusive Intercultural Education for Social Cohesion”** by Kachinland College (Myanmar)
- **“Schools of Peace”** by Museo de la Palabra y la Imagen (El Salvador)
- **“Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom Chapter Expansion”** by Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom (USA)
- **“Women as Peace Champions”** by Women’s Rights Association (Pakistan)
- **“180° Wende”** by 180° Wende (Germany)

UNAOC continued to maintain and utilize **Intercultural Leaders (IL)** – an online platform developed in partnership with the BMW Group as an exclusive skill and knowledge-sharing tool for former participants in all UNAOC programming activities.

By the end of December 2019, 996 alumni had joined the platform and are now collaborating with like-minded civil society leaders and organizations, committed to advance UNAOC’s mission and objectives across the world.





They all specialize in one or more of the action pillars of UNAOC and in key areas such as diversity and social inclusion; intercultural dialogue; interfaith understanding; media literacy; peacebuilding and conflict resolution; preventing violent extremism; preventing xenophobia and hate speech; sports for social change, and more. IL is a rich pool of expertise from civil society with whom UNAOC engages and consults on global issues, collects inputs and advice on programming, design and implementation. It also mainstreams their voices and expertise into international policy settings.



## COMING UP IN 2020

In a spirit of the 'All-of-UN approach' and building on a unique expertise of United Nations agencies and entities, UNAOC designed or, together with partners, contributed to conceptualization of new initiatives. The following will commence in the coming months:

- **"Global Programme on Security of Major Sporting Events, and Promotion of Sport and Its Values as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism"**, spearheaded by UNOCT in partnership with UNAOC, the United Nations Interregional Criminal Justice Research Institute and the International Centre for Sport and Security;
- **"#YouthWagingPeace Phase II: The Whole Community Approach to Prevention of Violent Extremism through Education"**, implemented by the UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development in collaboration with UNAOC;
- **"MOOC on Global Education"**, an initiative of the North-South Center of the Council of Europe in collaboration with UNAOC and other partners;
- **"Peer-to-Peer Training of Young Religious Leaders and Young Media Makers"**, a joint project of UNAOC, UNOCT and UNCCT;
- **"Intercultural Dialogue and Socio-Emotional Competencies for Peacebuilding"**, a new project developed in a tripartite co-operation between UNAOC, UNESCO and UNCCT;

## CHAPTER 5

# POLICY ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH:

## PROMOTING UNAOC PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

As a global convener, UNAOC continued to advocate for the promotion of interfaith, interreligious and intercultural dialogue. As part of the United Nations family, UNAOC joined forces with other agencies in promoting global citizenship education; a culture of peace; the youth, peace and security agendas; migration and development; preventing and countering violent extremism conducive to terrorism. It held a series of advocacy events and contributed its knowledge and expertise to the regional and international high-level conferences.

## PROMOTING INTERFAITH AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

In 2019, UNAOC significantly broadened the space for the engagement of faith-based organizations and religious leaders through close consultations within the framework of the United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites. This space will further expand, as UNAOC, together with OSAPG, assumes the co-chairmanship of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Religion and Sustainable Development (IATF) for 2020-2022.

Throughout the year, the High Representative highlighted the work of UNAOC and the role of faith and religious leaders in preventing and countering all forms of discrimination, xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and



*The High Representative for UNAOC addressed a hearing of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom and presented the new UN Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites, developed by UNAOC, October 2019, Washington, D.C.*

Christianophobia. Presentations and speaking engagements have been made during the Global Conference of Human Fraternity (February, United Arab Emirates), High-Level Meeting on Promoting Interfaith Pluralism and Understanding for Prevention: An Interactive Panel Celebrating the 2019 Interfaith Harmony Week (February, United Nations Headquarters, New York), International Conference From Interfaith and Inter-civilizational Cooperation to Human Solidarity (June, Austria), Ministerial Meeting on Advancing Religious Freedom (July, USA), Religions for Peace 10th World Assembly (July, Germany), Uniting to Confront Violence Against Places of Worship (September, USA) and II Baku Summit of World Religious Leaders (November, Azerbaijan).



## PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM CONDUCTIVE TO TERRORISM

UNAOC is a signatory of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact. Throughout 2019, UNAOC remained an active member and acted as a vice-chair of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism.

During the 5th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue held in Baku, Azerbaijan, UNAOC convened a plenary session on “#Youth4Peace: Building a Counter-Narrative to Violent Extremism”. Held in an interactive format between the High Representative and fourteen UNAOC programme alumni, the event presented good practices on countering violent extremism through the promo-







*UNAOC co-organized the 5th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, in partnership with the Government of Azerbaijan, UNESCO, UNWTO, the Council of Europe, and ICESCO on the theme, "Building dialogue into action against discrimination, inequality and violent conflict", May 2019, Baku, Azerbaijan*

tion of intercultural and interfaith dialogue, and innovative approaches on ways to involve youth in preventing violent extremism. Alumni made recommendations to address the shortcomings and challenges young people face when trying to take part in the global efforts to prevent violent extremism, conducive to terrorism. They focused on the role of young people in tackling key issues such as preventing and addressing hate-speech and online radicalization; supporting diversity and the inclusion of minorities; assessing and improving the impact at grassroots level of the United Nations youth policy; educating younger generations about tolerance and respect for the "other"; using interreligious dialogue as a tool for reconciliation.

On the occasion of the African regional high-level conference in July, in Nairobi,

Kenya, the High Representative highlighted the work of UNAOC during a session on "Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism in Africa – Experiences, Good Practices and Lessons Learned".



## SUPPORTING THE YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA

UNAOC continued to be a member of the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD) in line with the Network's aim to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations work in youth development by leveraging on collaboration, knowledge and expertise exchange among all relevant United Nations agencies and entities. It provided regular inputs to reports and other policy documents, including a joint IANYD Action Plan. Furthermore, UNAOC co-led two working groups within the Network under the 'Embracing diversity and respecting identities' and 'Investment mobilizer' workstrands. In the role of co-leader, UNAOC organized meetings within the work-streams, tracked the status of activities as well as reported back to the wider IANYD network.

In the sidelines of the 2019 ECOSOC Youth Forum, UNAOC, in partnership with the Permanent Missions of Spain and Finland to the United Nations, the United Nations Popula-

tion Fund, Peacebuilding Support Office and Search for Common Ground, convened a panel discussion on a data-driven and evidence-based approach to investing in youth-led organizations for advancing the youth, peace and security agenda. UNAOC alumni of YSF, Ms. Abiodun Rufus Unegbu, Executive Director of the Leadership Initiative for Youth Empowerment, and Mr. Youness Ben-Abbou, International Project Coordinator of Chantiers Sociaux Marocains, presented projects on the promotion of mutual understanding between Muslim and Christian communities following the insurgency in northern Nigeria, and encouragement of values of coexistence between local and migrant communities in Morocco. The event closed with a call for interested stakeholders to convene through the Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security to discuss next steps on developing a framework for evaluation and the evidence-based approach for investing in young people and youth-led peacebuilding organizations.

*UNAOC alumni shared lessons learned from their work, including the need for sustained funding beyond proof of concept, that safe spaces are required for activities and activism, and that young people should be supported in their creativity, April 2019, United Nations headquarters, New York*



## PROMOTING GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Throughout the year, UNAOC actively promoted the importance of global citizenship education (GCED), seeking to establish a culture of peace, where people of different identities, faiths and cultures can identify as citizens belonging to a common humanity and where values of pluralism and diversity are viewed as enriching rather than polarizing. GCED serves as a useful vehicle to equip young generations with the skills and capacity that help them identify racist ideologies, hate speech and fake news. To highlight the importance of GCED, UNAOC joined forces with member states and relevant stakeholders, convening in-depth exchanges and participating in events to further refine the concept and broaden an international coalition of like-minded partners.

UNAOC convened a breakout session on *"Global Citizen Education: Nurturing a Culture of Peace"* during the 5th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, in Baku, Azerbaijan. Speakers included UNESCO MGIEP, NSC, KAICIID, the Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan, SIETAR Switzerland and two UNAOC youth alumni who promote GCED in Pakistan (IIA winner) and Sri Lanka (YSF recipient).

UNAOC co-convened a panel discussion on *"Relevance of Intercultural Dialogue and Learning as Vector to Effectively Achieve the SDGs"*. It featured remarks by two UNAOC alumni from Indonesia (YSF recipient) and Iran (YPB participant). The panel was held during the 25th Lisbon Forum, in November, in Lisbon, Portugal, which was attended by several UNAOC programme alumni of YPB, IIA and the Fellowship Programme.

UNAOC co-organized a side-event on *"The Role of Transformative Education in Dealing with the Challenges of Our Times"*, together with the Permanent Missions of the Republic of Korea and the State of Qatar to the United Nations, UNDP, UNESCO and UNESCO Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding. Panelists included a former participant of YPB from Algeria, who uses radio to empower fellow youth, in July, during the High-Level Political Forum, at the United Nations Headquarters, New York.

UNAOC presented its impact regarding GCED in the field at the *4th ambassadorial meeting of the Group of Friends on Education for Global Citizenship* in April, hosted by the Permanent Missions of the Republic of Korea and the State of Qatar to the United Nations, in New York.



*Mourad Yazli of Algeria, a participant in the UNAOC Young Peacebuilders programme, spoke at the #HLPF2019 side event on transformative education organized by the Permanent Missions of the Republic of Korea and the State of Qatar, July 2019, New York*



## COUNTERING HATE SPEECH, XENOPHOBIC AND RACIST RHETORIC



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*“Hate speech is in itself an attack on tolerance, inclusion, diversity, and the very essence of our human rights.*

*It undermines social cohesion and lays the foundation for violence.”*

*The High Representative for UNAOC at the high-level roundtable on countering hate speech organized by the Permanent Missions of Turkey and Pakistan to the United Nations, September 2019, United Nations Headquarters, New York*

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UNAOC presented its work on the media coverage of migration in traditional and new media, especially its activities on hate speech and its impact on minority groups at a meeting of the OECD Network of Communication Officers on Migration (May, Boulogne-Billancourt, France).

The UNAOC High Representative spoke on a panel “Rising Populism and Racism” during the 11th Ambassadors Conference in Ankara, Turkey. He showcased the work of UNAOC in addressing the issues of intolerance, racism,

discrimination, xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiments. Mr. Moratinos was also a keynote speaker at the high-level round table on “Countering Hate Speech”, co-sponsored by the Permanent Missions of Turkey and Pakistan to the United Nations in September, United Nations Headquarters, New York. During the event, the High Representative warned against the dangerous causality between hate speech and violence, attacks on religious sites, atrocity crimes, including genocide, calling for all stakeholders to step up in response, prevent and counter hate speech.

## PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION AND POSITIVE COVERAGE OF MIGRATION

In the area of conflict prevention, UNAOC actively promoted the values of social inclusion and the importance of ethical coverage of migrants and their contribution to host societies. As an active member of the United Nations Network on Migration, established under the umbrella of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, UNAOC provided substantive inputs at the first Network's annual meeting in December. Fostering inclusive societies, UNAOC advocated for media narratives about migration and people's perceptions of migrant communities to be taken into consideration by the Network in its future work. In its capacity as an observer to the Global Forum on Migration and Development, UNAOC authored a research paper on "Communicating effectively with migrants" in preparation of the summit in Quito, Ecuador, January 2020.

*During the 18th session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 25 April, United Nations Headquarters, UNAOC took part in a panel on "Rights to Indigenous Communications: Honoring our cultures, languages, and traditions through digital storytelling". UNAOC presented PLURAL+ and how the initiative has been instrumental in providing youth filmmakers – including indigenous filmmakers – with a platform to make their voices heard about pressing social issues.*

In the framework of the 2019 ECOSOC Youth Forum, UNAOC and IOM organized a photo exhibition, visited by over 1,000 youths. The exhibition highlighted the most compelling photos and quotes from winning PLURAL+ videos related to the topics of migration, social inclusion, diversity and the prevention of xenophobia. UNAOC also joined a panel on "People on the Move", contributing to the debate on the pressing issues of xenophobia, human rights of all, safety, inclusive societies and freedom of migrants, especially youth.

UNAOC participated in the 24th World Scout Jamboree (July, West Virginia, USA), which was attended by 42,000 youth participants and adult volunteers. UNAOC engaged with participants in discussions on the topics of migration, social inclusion, diversity and prevention of xenophobia. The active discussion was an opportunity to discuss the importance of words and terminology when speaking about migrants and minority groups.

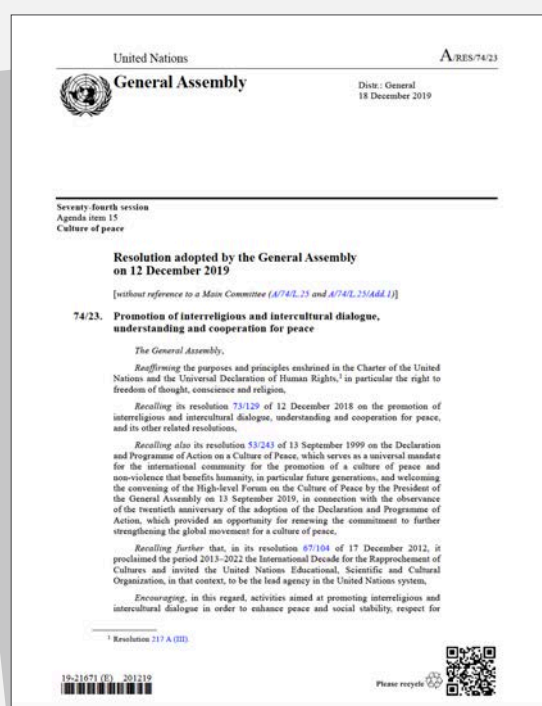
Aiming to give a voice to young filmmakers globally and discuss the power of storytelling on their migratory experience, UNAOC co-organized a *Youth Migration Film Forum* in October at the United Nations Headquarters. Held in partnership with the World Council of Peoples for the UN (WCPUN), the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations, the Consulate General of Mexico in New York and IOM, the event featured two youth-produced short films, which received the PLURAL+ awards.

## PROMOTING A CULTURE OF PEACE

On 13 September, in response to the invitation of the President of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly, UNAOC participated in the annual high-level forum on the culture of peace, celebrating its 20th anniversary. During a panel discussion, the UNAOC High Representative addressed the challenges of a transition from a culture of war to a culture of peace, calling for the international community to build a world of harmony, acting together as one. UNAOC has also supported the office of the President by co-organizing an informal luncheon on accelerating the implementation of sustainable development goals through the promotion of a culture of peace.



*Ms. Donya Nasser, UNAOC Fellowship Programme alumna, reported on the recommendation made by the participants of the luncheon thematic roundtable entitled “Bottom-up Approach to Promoting a Culture of Peace; Civil Society Organizations, Youth and Municipalities”, September 2019, United Nations headquarters, New York, High Level Forum on Culture of Peace*



In December 2019, the United Nations General Assembly adopted without a vote the annual draft resolution on the “Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace” (A/RES/74/23) under the item “Culture of Peace”. UNAOC worked with interested delegations to ensure that the resolution recognizes its contribution to intercultural dialogue and interreligious dialogue (operative paragraph 5) and includes a reference to the United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites. In preambular paragraph 17, the General Assembly takes note of the leading role played by UNAOC in preparing the Plan and invites member states to consider implementing the relevant recommendations addressed to them in collaboration with other stakeholders, as appropriate.



## OP-EDS AND LECTURES BY THE UNAOC HIGH REPRESENTATIVE



As part of his mandate, the High Representative delivered lectures and wrote op-ed articles to speak on behalf of UNAOC on pressing social issues facing various regions in the world. The op-ed articles were featured on his blog entitled **“Convivencia”** (<http://blog.unaoc.org>) and regularly published by leading media outlets. Topics covered in the lectures and op-eds included:

- UNAOC mandate, vision for 2019-2023 and the importance of preventive diplomacy in the 21st century.
- The United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites and the strategy of UNAOC to support its implementation; the crucial role that religious leaders play in building trust, fostering dialogue, stressing unity, solidarity, and mutual understanding, and in offering counter narratives in response to hatred and division.
- The tragic fire at Notre-Dame de Paris in France in April 2019, and its significance for the global community, calling for embracing cultures, religions and civilizations of our dear humanity.
- The increase in hateful incidents around the world, the stigmatization of the “other” through hate and violence, the attacks on different beliefs, religions and cultures, and the need to foster inclusion and solidarity.

## PRESS STATEMENTS AND PRESS RELEASES

UNAOC published 62 press statements and releases that were shared with a wide network of media contacts and UNAOC supporters, as well as members of the Group of Friends and United Nations entities and field missions, when relevant. Press statements had a particular focus on condemning terrorist attacks against religious sites and worshippers, including the attack in Christchurch, New Zealand. Other statements served to commemorate United Nations International Days relevant to the mandate of UNAOC and special meetings of the High Representative, including an official visit to Sri Lanka after the tragic terrorist attack in Colombo in April 2019, as well as audiences with His Majesty



King Salman Bin Abdelaziz, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques in July and His Holiness Pope Francis in December 2019.

### MEDIA COVERAGE

Throughout the year, UNAOC was featured in leading media outlets around the world, in all formats (web, radio, TV, etc.), and a multitude of languages, including Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Media outlets included China Daily, China Focus, and Xinhua (China); Al-Ahram and Egypt Today (Egypt); La Lettre Diplomatique, Le Parisien, Mediapart and TV5Monde (France); Agenzia Nazionale Stampa (Italy); Agence Marocaine de Presse (Morocco); Al Jazeera English (Qatar); Anadolu Agency and TRT World (Turkey); Al Arabiya (Saudi Arabia); El Mundo, Expansion, La Vanguardia, and EFE (Spain), among others.



*Upon assuming his post as the High Representative for UNAOC in January 2019, Mr. Moratinos was a guest at the United Nations headquarters noon briefing, during which he presented his vision and objectives for UNAOC.*

### DIGITAL OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS

UNAOC amplified its digital branding and communications strategies to maximize the visibility of its various activities and programmes to ensure maximum reach and impact. It strengthened its digital presence through a revamped and brand-new website, **www.unaoc.org**. The changes include a more visually-rich design, optimized data architecture, new multimedia elements to increase interactivity, and a generally better interface to boost the overall user experience.



#### 4Million average page views

with **600,000+** unique new users, of which nearly 70% are 18-34 years old



#### Global Audience

Top ten sources of web traffic coming from: Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Nigeria, Philippines, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States

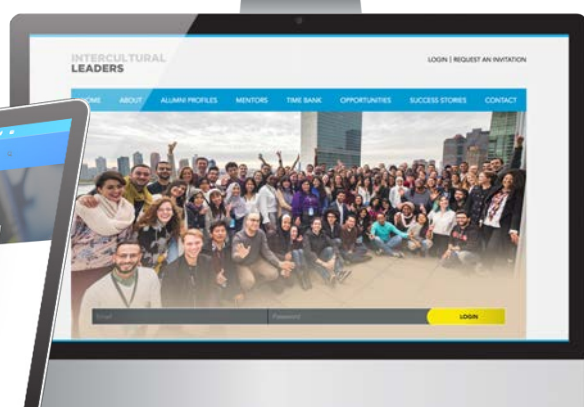
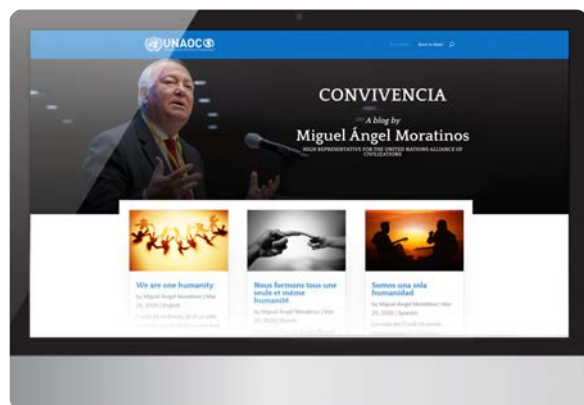


#### Gender Balance

Users are comprised of **40.9%** females and **59.1%** males



UNAOC launched a series of new microsites and digital assets, as well as continued to update its existing web assets for various programming activities:





To amplify branding and visibility, UNAOC published a range of communication materials, including brochures, newsletters, flyers, infographics, interactive presentations, and other multimedia components. UNAOC created a series of short videos highlighting its programmes and their impact on communities around the world. The videos were featured during public events and actively promoted on social media.



The infographic features five overlapping circles with various colors (light blue, teal, dark blue, grey, and white) containing icons and text. The central white circle is the largest and contains the most detailed information. The other circles are arranged around it, each highlighting a specific metric.

Metric	Value
@UNAOC main account Twitter followers	16,999
Followers across all social media platforms	141,652
Twitter total audience reach in 2019	7.6 MILLION
Facebook followers	114,887
Instagram and LinkedIn followers	10k+
Twitter total audience reach in 2019 (Key trending events)	7.7M users
Accounts reached during the #iiaaward2019 campaign	777,375

**Twitter total audience reach in 2019**

Key trending events on Twitter in 2019:  
 PLURAL+ Awards Ceremony (#PLURALplus19)  
 and the IIA Ceremony (#iiaaward2019)

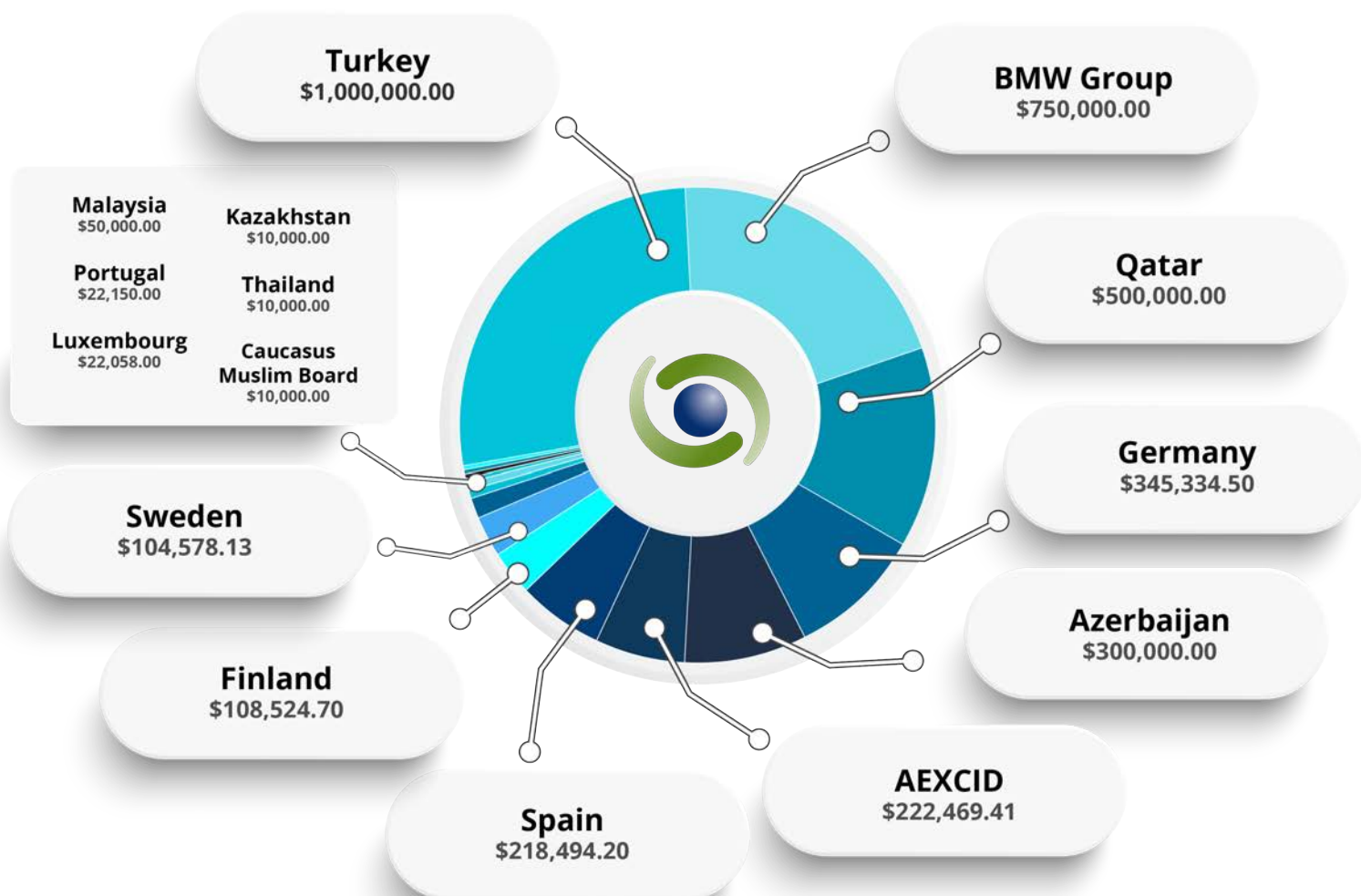
In 2019, UNAOC celebrated landmark campaigns to promote key international days by highlighting the relevant achievements of the beneficiaries of its programmes, such as Youth Solidarity Fund alumni on International Youth Day, among others. UNAOC worked closely with the Office of the United Nations Secretary-General, providing inputs to the background notes and statements of the Secretary-General on issues falling under the UNAOC mandate.

## CHAPTER 6 FUNDING

The achievements and progress outlined in this report have been made possible through the generous contributions to the UNAOC Trust Fund. UNAOC operation and programming work are entirely funded by the voluntary contributions with no allocations from the United Nations regular budget.

In 2019, UNAOC raised US\$3,679,139.44 of voluntary contributions from sixteen donors. Compared to 2018, top donors base remained consistent.

### 2019 DONORS OF THE UNAOC TRUST FUND

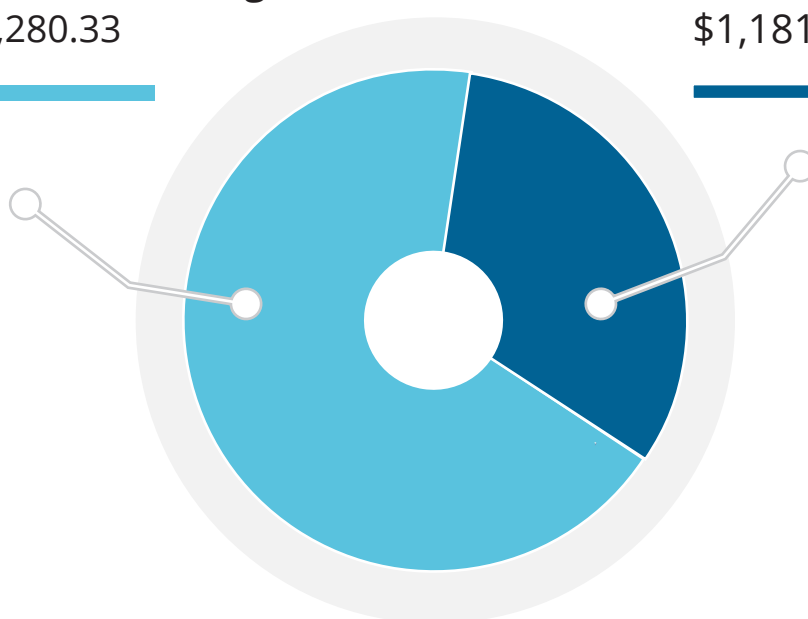




DONOR	AMOUNT (US)	
Turkey	\$1,000,000.00	27.18%
BMW Group	\$750,000.00	20.39%
Qatar	\$500,000.00	13.59%
Germany	\$345,334.50	9.39%
Azerbaijan	\$300,000.00	8.15%
AEXCID	\$222,469.41	6.05%
Spain	\$218,494.20	5.94%
Finland	\$108,524.70	2.95%
Sweden	\$104,578.13	2.84%
Malaysia	\$50,000.00	1.36%
Portugal	\$22,150.00	0.60%
Luxembourg	\$22,058.00	0.60%
Kazakhstan	\$10,000.00	0.27%
Thailand	\$10,000.00	0.27%
Caucasus Muslim Board	\$10,000.00	0.27%
Malta	\$5,530.50	0.15%

**Softly earmarked/  
unrestricted funding:**  
\$2,497,280.33

**Restricted funding:**  
\$1,181,859.11



*The above contributions are displayed as recorded in the UNAOC Trust Fund. Multi-year pledges made by the donors and those reflected in the multi-year financing agreements are not recognized in this report.*

## FUNDING

In addition, UNAOC received in-kind support, including: seconded official from the Government of Spain; young expert from the regional government of Extremadura, Spain; premises and local logistical support from the Governments of Qatar, Morocco and the League of Arab States for the Fellowship Programme.

Similarly to previous years, UNAOC continued to face several challenges in regard to its institutional sustainability and operational capacity. Addressing them has become one of the top priorities of the High Representative in 2019 and beyond:

### FLEXIBILITY OF FUNDING

The global trend towards donors earmarking contributions continued to impact UNAOC.

The flexible, unearmarked funding is critical for UNAOC to be able to allocate resources where and when they are needed. This is particularly important, as flexible contributions are required for UNAOC to carry out its special mandate, to be able to plan strategically and deliver on requests of the Secretary-General within a very limited timeframe.

An example of the latter is the Secretary-General's task to develop the United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites, which UNAOC received in March 2019 and completed within six months.

### PREDICTABILITY OF CONTRIBUTIONS

To date, only several donors entered into multi-year financial agreements with UNAOC, pledging financial contributions beyond a given fiscal year.

In contrast, the majority of donors continued to pledge their support on a year-to-year basis. Oftentimes they are allocating contributions to the UNAOC Trust Fund from development aid (technical assistance) budgets.

This trend undermines the institutional capacity to recruit talent and secure workforce long-term.

For example, in 2019, all UNAOC's personnel contracts continued to be extended only for three-month terms.

### TIMELINE OF TRUST FUND REPLENISHMENT

The majority of funds for the ongoing fiscal year (73.3% in financial year 2019) continued to arrive in 3rd and 4th quarters of the year.

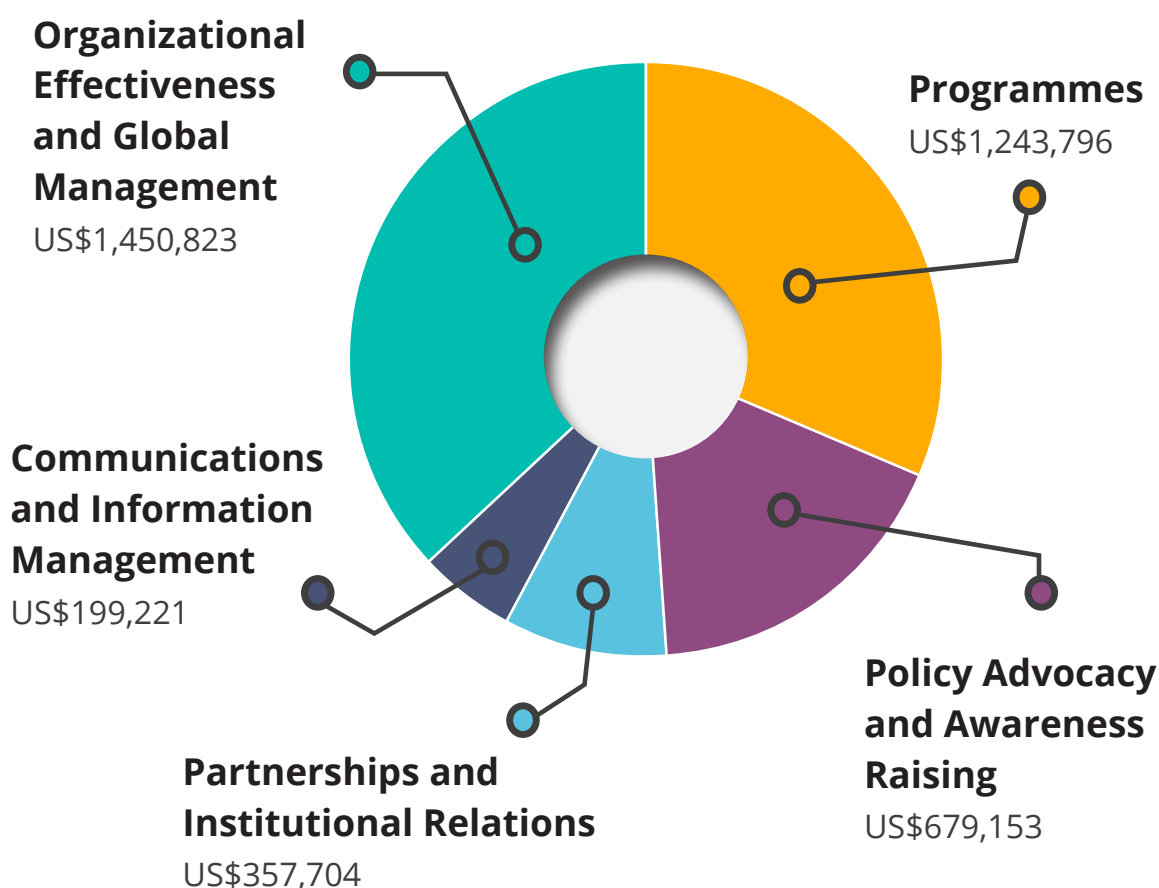
This trend directly impacted the programmes' launch and implementation.

Coupled with a low predictability of funding, it undermines the ability of UNAOC to timely deliver on services and programmes.

As a consequence, several UNAOC programmes and initiatives tend to schedule on-the-ground activities during the second half of the year, overlapping in time with other programmes and operational closure of the fiscal year.

## 2019 UNAOC EXPENDITURES

In 2019, UNAOC maintained budget discipline and sought cost savings wherever possible. It remained committed to the principles of organizational efficiency, effectiveness, results-orientation and transparency. The budget allocations have been prioritized towards maintaining ongoing programming across all UNAOC pillars and to the development of new projects in line with the Plan of Action 2019-2023; UNAOC advocacy engagements and its policy work across several United Nations inter-agency task forces, as well as expanding its partnership base.



*All FY 2019 figures are provisional and aim to provide aggregate data by substantive and administrative types of activities carried out by UNAOC. They are inclusive of project support costs.*

*Information on closing balance and investments is reflected in the statements of financial position for the UNAOC Trust Fund, issued by the United Nations Secretariat on an annual basis. Audited financial statement for the UNAOC Trust Fund 2019 will become available upon completion of the audit, which is ongoing as of the time of this report release.*

*The UNAOC Trust Fund is administered by the United Nations and is subject to an audit by the United Nations Board of Auditors in conformity with the International Standards on Auditing and the United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules.*





*“One humanity. Many cultures.”*

*UNAOC aims to improve understanding and cooperation among nations and peoples across cultures and to reduce polarization at local and global levels. It helps develop more inclusive societies, in which diversity is experienced as an asset.*

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