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Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), addressed the official Opening Ceremony of the 13th Conference of Culture Ministers in the Islamic World in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The two-day gathering, jointly organized by the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) and the Ministry of Culture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, explored the theme “Impact of Culture on Socio-Economic Development”.



In his remarks, the High Representative reflected on the added value of embracing cultural diversity and highlighted the role of UNAOC in advancing intercultural dialogue. He further underscored the importance of culture in achieving sustainable development, emphasizing that diversity and plurality are essential vectors in achieving a peaceful future for all.

“To address the global challenges our world is facing today, it is more imperative than ever to work for a culture of peace, as the essential foundation for global cooperation and action.”

– **USG Miguel Ángel Moratinos**,
High Representative for UNAOC, at the 13th Conference of Culture Ministers in the Islamic World (Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)

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“The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations strengthens a culture of peace through our cross-sectoral initiatives in the areas of education, youth, women, religious leaders, faith-based organizations, media and migration,” the High Representative stressed.

“[...] It is not plausible to imagine a world where cultural and religious diversity are perceived as a threat that must be defeated rather than a richness that should be nurtured. [...] The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations was created to advance the concept of ‘Many Cultures, One Humanity’. That’s our motto and the premise of our mandate,” he said.

The high-level Opening Ceremony also featured remarks from **H.H. Prince Badr bin Abdulah bin Farhan Al Saud**, Minister of Culture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA); **H.E. Mr. Rustam Minnikhanov**, Head of the Republic of Tatarstan; **H.E. Dr. Hussein Ibrahim Taha**, Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC); and **H.E. Dr. Salim M. AlMalik**, Director-General of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO).

The 13th Conference of Culture Ministers in the Islamic World brought together Ministers of Culture, official delegations from ICESCO Member States, Heads of Regional and International Cultural Organizations, high-level officials, and other key stakeholders. (12 February)



High-level Meetings in Riyadh and Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



In Riyadh, Mr. Moratinos was received by **H.E. Mr. Waleed Abdulkarim El Khereiji**, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). They discussed strengthening cooperation in areas of mutual interest and preparations for the 11th UNAOC Global Forum, which KSA will host in 2025. (11 February)



During his visit to Jeddah, the High Representative met with **H.E. Dr. Salim Aimalik**, Director-General of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO), to discuss furthering their collaboration. (12 February)



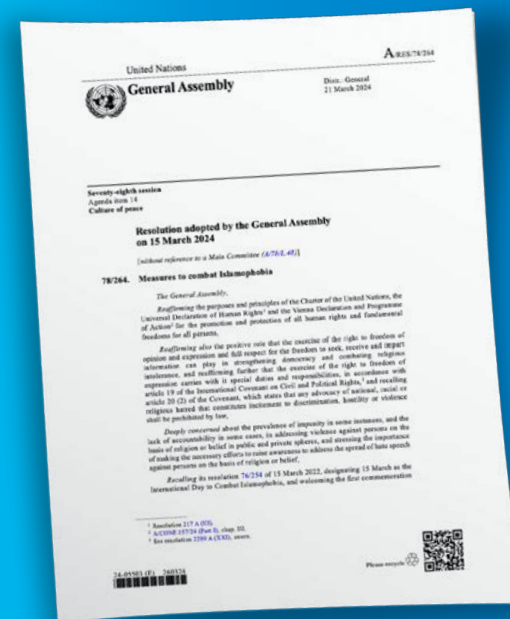
In Jeddah, the High Representative was received by **H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha**, Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). They discussed the implementation of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 78/264, "Measures to combat Islamophobia". (13 February)



USG Moratinos met with **H.E. Mr. Mohamed Mehdi Bensaid**, Minister of Youth, Culture and Communications of the Kingdom of Morocco, where they exchanged views on joint areas of cooperation. (12 February)



The High Representative with **H.E. Mr. El Houcein Ould Medou**, Mauritania's Minister of Culture, Arts, Communication and Relations with Parliament. They discussed areas of cooperation. (13 February)



The High Representative participated in the **11th United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Compact Coordination Committee Meeting** at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Organized by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the meeting focused on the implementation of the Pact for the Future. Opened by **Mr. Vladimir Voronkov**, Under-Secretary-General of UNOCT, the meeting featured Member States' perspectives on the Pact for the Future, as well as stakeholders' views on its implementation.

USG Moratinos highlighted the Pact's key action points aligned with UNAOC's mandate and priorities, including sustaining peace, building inclusive and just societies, addressing the root causes of conflicts and the drivers of terrorism, combating racism, racial discrimination, religious intolerance, and promoting intercultural and interreligious dialogue. (5 February)



The High Representative received a courtesy visit from **H.E. Mr. Tofiq Musayev** in his new capacity as the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations. They discussed ongoing collaboration on initiatives aimed at promoting intercultural and interreligious dialogue. (25 February)



USG Miguel Ángel Moratinos received **H.E. António de Almeida-Ribeiro**, Deputy Secretary-General of KAICIID, at the UNAOC office in New York. They discussed strengthening their cooperation on mutual areas of interest. (30 January)



Ms. Nihal Saad, Director of UNAOC, participated in a roundtable entitled "**Empowering interfaith dialogue, peacebuilding and conflict resolution**", hosted by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation New York office and Hanns Seidel Foundation. Also present in the meeting were **Dr. Volker Brecht**, Executive Director of the Stiftung für Grundwerte und Völkerverständigung; **Mr. Johannes Singhammer**, Former Vice-President of the Deutscher Bundesta; **Ms. Eva Bosbach**, Executive Director of Cologne New York Office, as well as other stakeholders, who came together to discuss the power of interreligious dialogue as a tool against polarization. (3 February)

HIGHLIGHTS: GLOBAL EVENTS AND CONFERENCES



UNAOC joined the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations in an event marking the **International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism** as and when Conducive to Terrorism.

Mr. Alessandro Girola, UNAOC's Chief of Programmes and Projects, participated in a session on leveraging innovative capacity-building interventions for the prevention of violent extremism. Emphasizing UNAOC's inclusive, all-of-society approach, he highlighted how UNAOC initiatives equip young people with education, skills, and opportunities for meaningful participation. Through such flagship programmes as the Intercultural Innovation Hub (IIH), the Young Peacebuilders programme, and the Youth Solidarity Fund, among others, UNAOC aims to strengthen young people's resilience against extremism and empower them to lead.

Joining virtually from Burkina Faso, **Wilfred Segbo** of the Association Development by Young People (ADYP), a recipient of the UNAOC Youth Solidarity Fund, underscored the need to integrate youth perspectives in peace processes and invest in youth-led solutions. (12 February)



UNAOC participated in the **Annual Retreat of the Multifaith Advisory Council (MFAC)** to the **UN Inter-agency Task Force on Religion (UNIATF)** in New York. The two-day meeting included a review of progress achieved in previous years and discussions on the 2025 collaboration priorities between UNIATF and MFAC. This year, UNAOC serves as the Secretariat of the Task Force, and will be coordinating the partnership with MFAC – the UN system's long-term faith-based partners mandated to provide strategic advice on key priorities and thematic areas. (29–30 January)



UNAOC took part in a side event entitled **"Successes and Challenges: How Adaptable Partnerships Drive Solutions, Build Trust, and Advance SDGs 5 and 16,"** organized by the Permanent Mission of Czechia to the United Nations; Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies; the International Development Law Organization (IDLO); the UN Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions; and the Gender Equality for Small Arms Network (GENSAC) in New York. **Ms. Dana Podmolikova**, UNAOC Programme Manager for Youth, presented a thematic paper developed jointly by UNAOC and the UN Youth Office that focused on contributing to the realization of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda through the lens of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda. (5 February)

PLURAL+

YOUTH VIDEO FESTIVAL ON MIGRATION
CELEBRATING DIVERSITY & SOCIAL INCLUSION

UNAOC United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

IOM UN MIGRATION

#PLURALplus25 CALL FOR VIDEOS

Champion positive social change through your video on migration, diversity, and social inclusion, and get international recognition!

📅 Deadline: Submit your video by **15 June 2025!**

🔗 Find out more at <https://pluralplus.unaoc.org>

Harnessing the power of storytelling, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) announced the call for submissions for the 2025 edition of the **PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival**, inviting young creators worldwide to submit short films on pressing social issues.

This year, PLURAL+ will continue to highlight key themes including migration and social inclusion, while spotlighting diverse perspectives; and will also introduce two special categories.

PLURAL+ International Jury Distinctions will be presented to the best videos in three different age categories (up to 12; 13 to 17; and 18 to 25 years old). Additionally, UNAOC and IOM will confer two Special Recognitions for “Combating Xenophobia and Discrimination” and “Promoting Responsible Narratives on Migration”. The deadline to submit videos to the 17th edition of PLURAL+ is Saturday, 15 June, at 11:59 EDT (New York time).

Full details and eligibility criteria are available at <https://pluralplus.unaoc.org>

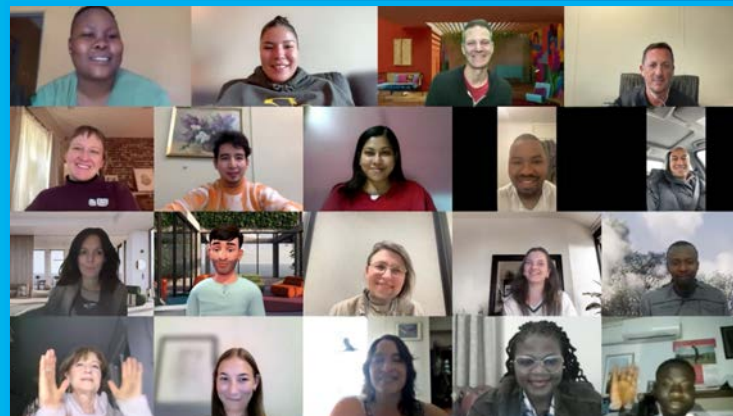
Videos from past editions of the **PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival** were showcased at a special screening on the margins of the **Kala Goda Arts Festival** in Mumbai, India. Organized by the Red Dot Foundation, a recipient of UNAOC’s and BMW Group’s Intercultural Innovation Hub, the event focused on “**Films for Gender Equality and Safety**” and featured 9 powerful short films.

Mr. Doğan Aşık, Strategic Partnerships Consultant at UNAOC, highlighted how PLURAL+ – a joint initiative of UNAOC and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) – empowers young filmmakers to amplify their creativity in addressing migration, diversity, and social inclusion. The screening was followed by a panel discussion moderated by former PLURAL+ International Jury Member **Ms. Supreet K. Singh**, with insights from fellow PLURAL+ Juror **Ms. Rashmi Lamba** and other filmmakers. (1 February)



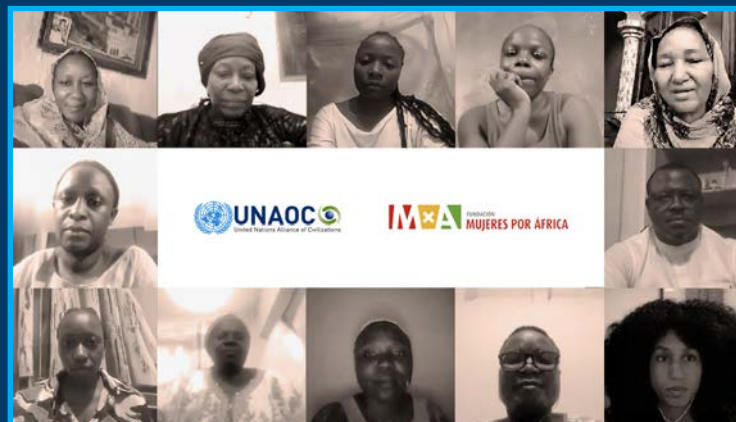


UNAOC, in collaboration with the UN Youth Office, developed a thematic paper entitled “Contributing to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals through the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda (YPS)”. The thematic paper explores activities implemented by UNAOC and the UN Youth Office – spotlighting the importance of youth engagement in achieving the Sustainable Development Agenda. The publication also presents recommendations to accelerate progress in achieving the SDGs while simultaneously advancing the YPS agenda, drawing from insights and lessons learned from concrete case studies.



key M&E frameworks, including measurable indicators, data collection methodologies, and practical strategies for effective impact reporting. This online engagement marks the beginning of a year-long comprehensive support programme provided to IIH recipients for one year, in addition to funding, capacity-building training and mentorship to scale up their impact. (13 February)

The 10 recipients of the current edition of the **Intercultural Innovation Hub (IIH)** participated in their first online workshop following the IIH Ceremony at the 10th Global Forum in Cascais, Portugal last year. The session explored the critical role of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) in strengthening impact, meeting donor expectations, and addressing common challenges such as resource mobilization and data collection. Participants gained valuable insights into



was the ongoing humanitarian and security crisis in the Kivu region in eastern DRC, with DRC participants sharing their insights. In addition to expressing solidarity and support, they emphasized the urgent need for greater global awareness and explored potential actions to address the ongoing violence and instability. (18 February)

UNAOC and Fundación Mujeres por África hosted their 24th virtual meeting for participants of their joint **Women’s Alliance for Peace** initiative. During the session, 30 grassroots women leaders from Mali, the Central African Republic (CAR), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) shared impact stories from the ground and identified areas to raise awareness, promote dialogue, and develop long-term solutions for sustainable peace. Central to the discussions

Read more at <https://www.unaoc.org/2025/02/womens-alliance-for-peace-drc/>



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