



**United Nations Alliance of Civilizations  
Group of Friends Meeting – Ministerial Level,  
September 27, 2013, New York, UNHQs**

**Ministerial Declaration**

**We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of States belonging to the Group of Friends of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations;**

**Together with the Directors General and Heads of Delegation of international organizations that are part of the Group of Friends of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations:**

***Reaffirming** our commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as other relevant international instruments, including UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity;*

***Acknowledging** United Nations' General Assembly Resolution 64/14 of 10 November 2009, adopted by consensus, which recognizes and welcomes the efforts of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and expresses support for its practical projects;*

***Recalling** General Assembly resolution 36/55 of 25 November 1981, proclaiming the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, and reaffirming the subsequent General Assembly and Human Rights Council resolutions on freedom of religion or belief and on combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence, and violence against persons based on religion or belief, including United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution 16/18 of March 2011;*

***Welcoming** United Nations General Assembly resolution 67/104 of 17 December 2012, which proclaims the period 2013-2022 as International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures and which offers Member States an opportunity to enhance their activities relating to interreligious and intercultural dialogue, promoting tolerance and mutual understanding;*

***Acknowledging** the leadership and contributions of the members of the Group of Friends, in particular the founding co-sponsors Spain and Turkey, as well as the other previous host countries of UNAOC Global Forums, Austria, Brazil, and Qatar;*

**Recognizing** the role of national parliaments and their active contribution at the international and regional levels through the process of soft diplomacy, for the achievement of the goals and mission of the UNAOC for the benefit of all citizens;

**Reaffirming** our support for the UNAOC and its High Representative;

**Emphasizing** the importance we attach to the continued efforts of UNAOC in increasing mutual respect among persons belonging to different religious and cultural groups;

**Saluting** regional processes to increase intercultural dialogue and cooperation among countries, in particular:

- the presentation of the 2nd Action Plan for the Mediterranean;
- the Fez Program of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean aimed at fostering mutual cooperation and understanding amongst the Parliamentary Assembly for the Mediterranean Member States and the Mediterranean region as a whole;
- the 2nd Action Plan for South-Eastern Europe;
- the conclusions of the 2nd Regional consultation for Asia/South Pacific;
- the presentation of the Regional Strategy for Latin America endorsed by Ministers and representatives of the region;
- the launch of a regional debate on the Danube and Black Sea Region, the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, and;
- the announcements by the League of Arab States and the African Union of their intention to work with their member states to develop their own regional strategies.

**Recognizing** the pioneering role of the UNAOC in mainstreaming youth participation in the global cross-cultural agenda and broader United Nations processes;

1. **Endorse** the High Representative's Strategic Plan (2013-2018), recognizing its important potential in achieving the goals of the Alliance of Civilizations as stated in the High-level Group Report of 13 November 2006;
2. **Reiterate** our support for the priorities of the High Representative; and **reaffirm** our commitment to the four pillars of UNAOC activity identified in the High-level Group Report, specifically Youth, Education, Media, and Migration;
3. **Encourage** the High Representative to continue programming within these recognized four pillars of activity as well as in other aspects underscored in the High-level Group Report, with a view to advance UNAOC's ability to serve as an instrument for preventing violence and fostering reconciliation, in particular, in the context of identity-based tensions and conflicts;
4. **Stress** the continuing need for UNAOC to highlight the importance of culture as an element in the post 2015 development agenda and to appropriately integrate socially inclusive approaches in development programming;
5. **Support** the implementation and development of Regional Strategies to increase cooperation among countries and organizations on intercultural dialogue, with the active leadership of the High Representative, multilaterals and governments in collaboration with civil society;

6. **Stress** the importance of implementing the Alliance's goals at a national level through the implementation of actions at country level or through National Strategies for intercultural dialogue, with the active leadership of governments in collaboration with civil society;
7. **Emphasize** the close link between the values and goals of the UNAOC and democratic processes and express support for the strengthening of this link through the projects and activities of the Alliance;
8. **Support** the role of the UNAOC as an advocate and promoter of new and creative approaches that advance intercultural and interreligious dialogue across sectors with the active participation of both men and women;
9. **Recognize** that the Alliance of Civilizations grows stronger with better governance through more proactive interaction with the Group of Friends and focal points;
10. **Acknowledge** the significance of the continued financial commitments made by Group of Friends, as well as other forms of support, and **stress** the ongoing need for financial support, taking into consideration the challenging financial situation that many States are facing.
11. **Highlight** the need to further enhance collaboration with relevant organizations, building on Memoranda of Understanding and other appropriate partnership modalities to optimize strategies for joint actions, thus avoiding overlap and dispersion;
12. **Emphasize** the importance of the Global Forums, involving the Group of Friends and partners, together with leading personalities of various areas, including the upcoming 2014 Global Forum in Indonesia.