



United Nations Alliance of Civilizations



VIENNA DECLARATION ON THE ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

27 February 2013

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

Together with the General Directors and other Heads of Delegation of international organizations also belonging to the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations;

On the occasion of the Fifth Global Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations, held in Vienna, Austria, on 27th and 28th February, 2013, preceded by a Global Youth Event, held on 26 February;

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, such as the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity;

Recognizing that all cultures, civilizations and religions contribute to the enrichment of humankind;

Convinced that the world's cultural diversity is a wealth to be cherished by all as a factor of peace and development;

Stressing the importance of respect and understanding for cultural and religious diversity, and encouraging tolerance, respect, dialogue and cooperation among different cultures, civilizations and peoples;

Emphasizing more specifically the importance of combating intolerance and discrimination based on ethnicity, race, colour, religion or belief;

Recognizing the importance of intercultural and interreligious dialogue in order to promote tolerance, pluralism and mutual respect, and expressing our support for the diverse initiatives taken by many countries and regions towards advancing such dialogue;

Emphasizing the important role of UNESCO and other international organizations in promoting these values and the need to develop closer cooperation between them in particular the interaction and coordination with the United Nations system;

Welcoming the continuing efforts made by the United Nations Secretary-General and his outgoing High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, Jorge Sampaio, to promote greater understanding and respect among civilizations, cultures and religions, by means *inter alia* of concrete projects in the priority areas of youth, education, media and migration, in collaboration with Governments, international and regional organizations, the private sector, foundations and civil society in general;

Taking into consideration United Nations' General Assembly Resolution 64/14 of 10 November 2009, adopted by consensus;

Recognizing the efforts made High Representative Jorge Sampaio over the past years to enhance the Alliance, enlarge its membership and develop local, national and regional actions on the ground at a global scale involving a wide range of stakeholders, partners and constituencies;

Reaffirming that at a time of global changes when our world is more interdependent than ever, it is crucial to promote responsible leadership in all spheres and at all levels; a leadership that understands the complexity of the world we live in and integrates values-based leadership, ethical decision-making as well as the cross-cultural bridge-building that is imperative in a medium/long-term perspective;

Praising Austria, as the host country of the 5th Global Forum of the Alliance, for focusing the Vienna Forum on the central topic of "Responsible Leadership in Dialogue and Diversity" and for promoting an informed debate on how responsible leadership can make a difference in three major issues: promotion, protection and full enjoyment of the right to freedom of religion and belief in a context of religious pluralism which consists not only of greater diversity, but of perceptions of that diversity and new patterns of interaction among religious groups; media pluralism and diversity of media content and their contribution to fostering public debate, democracy and awareness of diverse opinions; shaping a new narrative for migration, integration and mobility in the global economy;

Acknowledging the launch of the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue in Vienna as a new participant in the effort to enable, empower and encourage dialogue among followers of different religions and cultures around the world;

Acknowledging the unique opportunity created by the Vienna Forum to further deepen the regional approach that the Alliance has been developing over the past years, namely in the Mediterranean, South Eastern Europe, Latin America and Asia and South Pacific, as well as to open new avenues for cooperation in the Danube and Black Sea Region, the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia,

1. Welcome the new members of the Group of Friends of the Alliance of Civilizations;

2. Reiterate our commitment to the advancement of the goals and principles of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations based on the founding Report presented by the High Level Group in 2006;
3. Acknowledge the leadership and contributions of Turkey and Spain as the Co-Sponsors of the Alliance of Civilizations;
4. Pay tribute to President Jorge Sampaio, who completes his tenure as High Representative in Vienna, for his tireless efforts, his commitment and his strenuous leadership of the Alliance over the past six years and express their gratitude for the last report he submitted to the Group of Friends;
5. Congratulate His Excellency Mr. Al Nasser, former President of the General Assembly, for his appointment as the new High Representative and wish him well;
6. Express their support for the priorities identified by the incoming High Representative, President Al Nasser, in the Report he submitted to the Group of Friends and state that it will be used as a basis to prepare the 4th Implementation Plan of the Alliance of Civilizations, to be submitted in Summer 2013 to the United Nations Secretary-General and the Group of Friends;
7. Stress the importance of implementing the Alliance's goals at national level, in collaboration with governments and civil society, namely through the implementation of actions at country level or through National Plans for Intercultural Dialogue;
8. Support the development of regional processes to increase cooperation among countries on intercultural dialogue, praising, in that regard, the presentation of the 2nd Action Plan for the Mediterranean; 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 promoted by Austria; and welcome the announcement by the League of Arab States of the intention of its member states to develop their own regional strategy;
9. Recognize that the Alliance grew stronger with the commitments made by the Group of Friends at the 1st Partners Forum, organized under the Replenishment Mechanism on 31 May-1 June 2012 in Istanbul, and emphasize the importance of maintaining the momentum that was created therein;
10. Stress the importance of the 2nd Replenishment Session to the Voluntary Trust Fund of the UNAOC to be held on 28 February aimed at securing more predictable resources for the Alliance, enlarging the community of donors to

the private sector, philanthropists and individuals as well as increasing the level of available resources;

11. Recognize the important contribution to the debates given by the youth and welcome their commitment to lead by example in the promotion of responsible leadership in dialogue and diversity;
12. Acknowledge the importance of the annual Global Forums, involving the Group of Friends and partners, together with leading personalities of various areas, including the participation of youth and civil society as a means to promote the Alliance of Civilizations' ownership by all stakeholders and reach out to the grassroots;
13. Call for increased coordination and consultation between the Alliance and the members of the Group of Friends through the network of the National Focal Points as well as for more active participation of the members of the Partners Assembly in the activities of the Alliance;
14. Reiterate our appreciation to Spain for the First Global Forum, held in Madrid in January 2008; to Turkey, for the Second Global Forum, held in Istanbul in April 2009; to Brazil for the Third Forum, held in Rio in May 2010; and to Qatar for the Fourth Forum, held in Doha in December 2011;
15. Welcome the offer made by Indonesia to host the next Global Forum in 2014;
16. Extend our gratitude to the Government and people of Austria, in particular to the City of Vienna, for convening the present Fifth Global Forum in the period 27-28 February, 2013;
17. Call upon the full implementation of the announcements and commitments made in Vienna;
18. Express our conviction that the Vienna Forum has achieved its main objective of making the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations a really global undertaking, with universal aims and raising awareness to the urgent need to promote responsible leadership in all fields of action.