

**NINTH COORDINATION MEETING ON  
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**  
Population Division  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
United Nations Secretariat  
New York, 9-10 February 2012

**INPUT OF THE UNITED NATIONS ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS TO THE TENTH  
COORDINATION MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION<sup>1</sup>**

*United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)*

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<sup>1</sup> The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

Today, one of every thirty-five persons in the world is a migrant. Reinforcing efforts to harmonize the coexistence between newcomers and host communities is critical in improving social cohesion and intercultural relations, and in adding complexity to debates around migration.

**In this era of greatest human mobility ever recorded, communicating on the social, cultural and economic benefits of migration** helps counter the forces that fuel polarization and extremism. There is a real need to counter polarizing speech and stereotypes about migration and to emphasize that the ever-increasing cultural diversity is, indeed, a driving force for development, innovation and progress.

Therefore, in the field of migration, The UNAOC aims to recognize and highlight good practices of migrant integration and counter the negative narratives about migrants. It does these through an online community (IBIS), video competitions, and agenda-setting discussions on the contributions of migrants to development and peace.

→The UNAOC and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) have jointly built an online community on Migration and Integration: Building Inclusive societies (IBIS) aimed at promoting good practices of integration (<http://www.unaoc.org/ibis/>)

IBIS is an online community which showcases inspiring projects from around the world that successfully help integrate migrants. It connects grassroots initiatives with policy-makers and provides a platform to link civil society groups with potential funders. As a global meeting place for all those involved in improving migration policy and integration practices around the world, the community supports coordination and cooperation between practitioners. IBIS reaches out proactively to policy makers and opinion leaders within its network of partners, in order to become a hub for sharing replicable practices. As a source of information and a virtual space for exchange and learning, IBIS helps spread the word about successful initiatives in order to actively promote replication of good practices and eventually trigger effective change.  
(<http://www.unaoc.org/pluralplus>)

→The UNAOC has also developed PLURAL+ which is a youth-produced video festival encouraging young person to explore migration, diversity and social inclusion and to share their creative vision with the world. PLURAL+ is a joint initiative between the UNAOC and the IOM, with a network of over 50 partner organizations, who support the creative of young people and distribute their videos worldwide

In order to develop partnerships on the Migration and Integration program and to build up the Online community, the UNAOC Migration/Integration program is developing action oriented projects.

→Currently, the UNAOC is developing a video project in Italy that is meant to be replicated in various countries and featured as a series promoting examples of successful integration. The project launched in October 2011 consists of a 20-minute video showing

examples of good integration of migrants in various Italian cities and shifting the focus of the immigration debate towards the human side of the story. The video acknowledges migration as a positive reality. It focuses on collecting positive experiences and success stories of migrants in order to promote a positive image. The video illustrates how examples of good integration can lead to active participation of migrants in host societies and mutual contributions to development.

→Finally, the UNAOC Migration and Integration program, in partnership with two other organizations, is looking into opportunities to develop trainings addressing migration and integration issues for local authorities in Europe.

On the occasion of the roundtable “Reconciling diversity and cohesion: a human rights model to build inclusive and participatory societies in European countries” organized by the UNAOC in November 2011 and on the occasion of the UNAOC annual Forum that took place in Doha in December 2012, the UNAOC identified the **following priorities and next steps** in dealing with migration:

### **1) Sharing information and knowledge**

There is a need to share information and knowledge in order to avoid unnecessary efforts and to allow all stakeholders to have a better overview of the issue. While creating opportunities for joint discussions that could lead to joint initiatives, replication of existing good practices supporting social cohesion and promoting diversity was encouraged.

### **2) Advocacy action**

While emphasizing the need to demystify prejudices in a context where fears and perceptions replace facts and hope, more efforts should be put on actions for advocacy.

### **3) Media**

The role of media in shaping public opinions and behaviors is recognized as crucial. When playing their role of agent of information, media can have a positive influence in enhancing pluralistic societies. On the other hand, when supporting myths, stereotypes and prejudices, media can reinforce a climate of tension.

In order to prevent one discourse to take over the media, minorities should be encouraged to raise their voice in the media.

### **4) Tools**

When it comes to migrants and migration, there are two different narratives – one based on facts, and the other based on emotions. There is a need to answer both narratives. Considering that there is a general lack of information about social inclusion and that today’s societies do not have the tools to promote a realistic picture of diversity,

participants encouraged the development of existing tools and the creation of new tools that could answer both narratives and help promoting more inclusive societies.

Existing tools such as MIPEX (Migrant Integration Policy Index), Ibis (Integration: Building Inclusive Societies) and the *Scanlon-Monash Index (SMI)* should be developed further.

### **5) Policy strategies**

All stakeholders should be encouraging a two-pronged policy strategy, including both a soft and a hard approach encouraging states to adopt a comprehensive vision of social inclusion. While reiterating the need for both soft and hard laws, the idea of creating a code of conduct that could help the states better understand what hard law should be explored.