

**FIFTEENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations Secretariat
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**CONTRIBUTION
TO THE FIFTEENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION¹**

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)

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

A. UNAOC CONTRIBUTION ON MIGRATION RELATED ISSUES IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE 2030
AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1. In 2016, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) made significant progress in implementing the migration-related commitment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1).

- In the framework of UNAOC #SpreadNoHate initiative, which aims at countering hate speech in the media, and in the margins of the 71st session of the UN General Assembly, UNAOC organized a side event on “Combating xenophobic language in the media and fostering inclusive integration of migrants and refugees” on 15 September 2016 at the UN Headquarters in New York. The side event was co-sponsored by the European Union (EU), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Malta to the United Nations. In line with the UN global initiative against racism and xenophobia “Together: respect, safety and dignity for all,” the side event provided a platform for discussions in preparation of the UNGA High Level Summit on refugees and migrants held on 19 September 2016. It served as an opportunity for media experts, UN Officials, and NGOs representatives to address hate speech towards migrants and refugees in the media and come up with concrete recommendations to provide positive narratives. Over 120 people, including Governments and civil society representatives attended the side event. The discussion was also broadcast live on UN Web TV and reached close to 500,000 people globally online with the hashtag #SpreadNoHate.
- In this context, UNAOC participated in round table 4 on “Global Compact for responsibility sharing for refugees and respect for international law” at the UN High-Level Summit to Address Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants held on 19 September 2016 at the United Nations Headquarters.
- As an official observer of the Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD), UNAOC participated as a speaker in Roundtable 2.1 on “Migration, diversity, and harmonious society” at the 9th GFMD Summit held in Dhaka (Bangladesh) on 10-12 December 2016. Chaired by Morocco and Greece, the panel included speakers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova, the UN Human Security Unit, the UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMIDI), and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Through out the discussions, UNAOC promoted its #SpreadNoHate initiative, a global platform enabling media experts, journalists and other stakeholders to explore ways to combat hate speech against migrants and refugees in the media, and to promote positive narratives.

The Alliance has also been active in terms of implementing project activities related to the migration and development issues.

- PLURAL+, Youth Video Festival on Migration, Diversity and Social Inclusion, is a joint initiative of the UNAOC and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) with the support of a wide network of international partners. It aims to foster dialogue, partnership and action on critical issues and opportunities faced by youth worldwide. The Festival recognizes youth as powerful agents of social change, and supports cooperative efforts to reduce tension in a world too often characterized by conflict and division. PLURAL+ videos are now featured at film festivals across the world, including the Tribeca Film Festival, the Hamptons Film Festival, the

Seattle Film Festival, Chinh India Film Festival, the Royal Film Commission of Jordan, and the Refugee Film Festival in Kenya. Watched over one million times on the Internet, PLURAL+ videos were also displayed at high-level meetings at the European Commission and the United Nations Headquarters. On 27 October 2016, young media actors from over 10 countries participated in the PLURAL+ 2016 Festival and Awards Ceremony held in New York. This year, PLURAL+ 2016 received over 300 entries from 69 countries. Among them, 31 videos of young people from 21 countries were awarded (see map). The winning videos focus on migration, diversity and social inclusion. The four videos screened at the PLURAL+ International Jury Awards Ceremony, focused on social exclusion in school (*Excluded*, USA), the root causes of migration (*Migration*, Italy), un-documented migrants in New York (*The Price of our Dreams*, USA) and the plight of Syrian refugees (*I Am Aliya*, Slovenia).

- UNAOC also promotes initiatives aiming at implementing the SDGs. At the 7th UNAOC Global Forum, the Alliance awarded *Give Something Back To Berlin (GSBTB)*, a project platform and network that makes social engagement and neighborhood work accessible to the migrant population of Berlin, with the help of hundreds of volunteers from over 60 countries with different backgrounds. First placed awardee at the 7th UNAOC Global Forum, *GSBTB* hosted His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf and Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden during their first State visit to Germany in over 14 years. The organization seized the opportunity to present its work on migration, integration and the welcoming of refugees to the King and the Queen.

2. The Alliance also started to implement initiatives to support the implementation of the New York Declaration for refugees and Migrants, in particular when it comes to condemning xenophobia against refugees and migrants, supporting a global campaign to counter it, and strengthening the positive contributions made by migrants to economic and social development in their host countries.

- In this context, UNAOC and the European Union (EU) jointly organized a one-day Symposium to address “hate speech against migrants and refugees in the media” under the framework of the UNAOC #SpreadNoHate initiative. The Symposium took place in Brussels (Belgium) on 26 January 2017, and gathered over 100 participants from the media sector, civil society, international organizations, and tech companies such as Facebook and Google. Speakers included Mrs. Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, Mrs. Cecile Kyenge, Member of the European Parliament, and Mr. David Kaye, the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression. The Symposium also served as a platform to promote the UN global initiative against racism and xenophobia “Together: respect, safety and dignity for all”. The discussions were broadcast live and reached 13+ million Twitter accounts, with close to 30 million impressions. The Symposium trended on Twitter with the hashtag #SpreadNoHate as number 1 topic in Belgium and among the 35 top topics in the U.S. A policy report highlighting concrete recommendations to promote positive narratives towards migrants and refugees in the media, and foster their integration in host societies will be issued shortly.