



**Statement by H.E. Mr. Oh Joon,
President of the Economic and Social Council
at the UN Alliance of Civilizations Group of Friends Ministerial Meeting
New York, 1st October 2015**

***Sustainable Development Goals
and their Relevance to the work of the UNAOC***

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great privilege for me to take part in the annual Ministerial Meeting of the Group of Friends of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations.

The World leaders adopted a few days ago the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This Agenda is based on the determination to act simultaneously on various fronts: putting an end to poverty and hunger, protecting the environment, combating inequalities, promoting human rights and gender equality, and building peaceful and inclusive societies.

It is a multi-dimensional vision that goes well beyond the socio-economic indicators that characterized the Millennium Development Goals.

This echoes the ambition always embodied by the Alliance of Civilizations, which is to work for a more socially inclusive world as a condition for global peace.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and their 169 targets will allow for thorough follow-up and review starting next year. The Alliance of Civilizations has a great deal to contribute to implementing these ambitious goals

Goal 4 devoted to education states that all learners should acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development including through promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity.

Goal 8 aims at developing sustainable tourism policies that promote local culture and products, while Goal 11 includes a commitment to protect and safeguard the world's cultural heritage. These Goals connect cultures and civilizations to concrete economic activities and public policies.

Last but not least, we should pay attention Goal 16 on the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies, in particular target 7 on ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative institutions and decision-making at all levels.

Building national and local capacities is critical to tackling the drivers of conflict. Local institutions can create space for

dialogue within and amongst communities, build social cohesion, and address tensions and grievances.

The work carried out by the Alliance of Civilizations to develop contacts among leaders of communities, civil society and the youth is fully in line with the vision of peaceful and inclusive societies.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

We have committed ourselves to a very ambitious agenda, and it is now time for us to work together for its implementation. The Secretary-General will present a report on the follow-up and review mechanism, in preparation for the high-level political forum on sustainable development, to be held under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council in July next year.

The work of the Alliance of Civilizations in promoting common values, such as respect, dialogue and solidarity is taking us one step closer to a world free of violence and extremism. As such, the Alliance will also be a key partner in the pursuit of sustainable development for all peoples and for the planet. Our discussions here today can be a good starting point.

The Economic and Social Council will play its part in these endeavours by engaging all relevant partners.

Thank you.

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