



## **FEZ DECLARATION ON THE NINTH GLOBAL FORUM OF THE UNITED NATIONS ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS**

### **TOWARDS AN ALLIANCE OF PEACE: LIVING TOGETHER AS ONE HUMANITY FEZ – KINGDOM OF MOROCCO 22-23 NOVEMBER 2022**

We, the Heads of State and Government and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of States members of the Group of Friends of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) Together with the Director Generals and other Heads of Delegation of international organizations also members of the Group of Friends of UNAOC;

On the occasion of the Ninth Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, held in Fez, Kingdom of Morocco, 22-23 November, 2022 entitled “Towards an Alliance of Peace: Living Together as One Humanity”, which included a Youth Forum as well as other special side events;

Appreciating highly the Royal Message that His Majesty King Mohammed VI addressed to the participants of the Ninth UNAOC Global Forum, who strongly commended the depth, pertinence and force of its content. His Majesty highlighted in his Message that: “the Alliance is essential to us because it knows how to reclaim the conscience of the world in the face of withdrawal into oneself; it calls for cohesion in the face of adversity, and underlines the need to counter ignorance with education, and rejection with dialogue. The Alliance is essential to us because it puts values into action, not in chanted slogans. The Alliance is essential to us because it does not set people against each other; rather, it brings them together to promote a shared ideal and serve a common destiny”.

Reaffirming our commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

Stressing the importance of respect and understanding for cultural and religious diversity, of moderation as a value within societies; and encouraging, mutual respect, dialogue and cooperation among different cultures, civilizations and peoples to expand their activities promoting a culture of peace, and to ensure that peace and non-violence are fostered at the national, sub regional, regional and international levels;

Recognizing that the world is facing unfathomed challenges that require a global and collective response through a comprehensive approach that embraces human dimensions of all societies. In this regard, acknowledging that in the absence of peace, security and human rights, we risk the progress made in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

Recognizing the importance of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, which serve as the universal mandate for the international community, particularly the United Nations system, for the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence that benefits humanity, in particular future generations;

Encouraging UNAOC to continue to promote moderation as a universal value for attainment of peace, security, human rights and development;

Convinced that the world’s cultural diversity and heritage, are a wealth to be cherished and sustained by all as an essential element for promoting peace, security, human rights and development among all nations;



Recognizing the importance of intercultural and interreligious dialogue and cooperation in order to promote mutual respect, good neighborliness and pluralism and expressing its support for the diverse initiatives taken by governments, international organizations and civil society in this regard;

Acknowledging the importance of the role of the Marrakesh Declaration adopted in January 2016, on religious minorities in predominantly Muslim majority countries;

Noting with appreciation the United Nations Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence;

Noting with appreciation the United Nations Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes, also called the Fez Plan of Action;

Welcoming General Assembly Resolution A/RES/65/5: “World Interfaith Harmony Week”;

Welcoming General Assembly Resolutions A/RES/73/328 and A/RES/75/309: “Promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue and tolerance in countering hate speech” that take note of the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech, and highlight efforts to combat hate speech, and proclaim 18 June as the International Day for Countering Hate Speech, to be observed annually;

Welcoming General Assembly Resolution A/RES/75/258: “Promoting a culture of peace and tolerance to safeguard religious sites” which takes note with appreciation of the UN Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites, developed by the UNAOC and invites the Secretary-General to convene a global conference to contribute to spearheading political support for specific actions to take the Plan forward;

Welcoming General Assembly Resolution A/RES/76/157 on “Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping, stigmatization, discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons, based on religion or belief”;

Noting with appreciation the General Assembly Resolution A/RES/76/254: “International Day to Combat Islamophobia” which takes note of the Press Statement “A call for mutual respect” by the High Representative of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, recognize UNAOC as a global platform to address Islamophobia and other forms of discrimination based on religion or belief and further welcome the proclamation of 15 March as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia;

Noting with appreciation further the General Assembly Resolution A/RES/76/250: “Holocaust denial” which rejects and condemns without reservation any denial or distortion of the Holocaust, urges member states to develop educational programs to take active measures to combat antisemitism and Holocaust denial and encourages the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations to continue to stand up against antisemitism in his role as the UN Focal Point to monitor antisemitism and enhance a system-wide response, and notes in this regard “UNESCO program to address antisemitism through education”, “UNESCO international program on Holocaust and genocide education” and “Guide for African teachers on learning about genocide”;

Alarmed by the acts of intolerance, violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, violence, including sectarian violence, and terrorism in various parts of the world, which claim innocent lives, cause destruction, target religious sites, and displace people, and rejecting the use of violence, regardless of any motivation;

Reaffirming the commitment made by all Member States under the Charter of the United Nations to promote and encourage universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction,



and reaffirming also that Member States are under the obligation to protect and respect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons;

Emphasizing that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality or ethnic group;

Recognizing UNAOC's important role in addressing the root causes of polarization, radicalization and violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism;

Recognizing also UNAOC's relevant role in raising awareness of the importance of addressing the stigmatization and hate speech against refugees and migrants, and emphasizing the importance of respecting their human rights, safety and cultural diversity;

Recognizing also in this regard the value added by such UNAOC programs and initiatives including , Young Peace Builders, the Intercultural Innovation Hub , PLURAL+ Video Festival, the Youth Solidarity Fund (YSF), One Humanity Campaign, Sports for One Humanity, Les Medias C'est Nous, Women as Peace Mediators in cultural and religious settings;

Noting the important role that youth can play in preventing violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, and the need to promote youth's participation and empowerment to that end;

Emphasizing our common determination to combat the scourges of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including incitement to violence based on hatred, in all their forms and manifestations for the goal of living together in inclusive societies;

Highlighting the global concerns about the exponential spread and proliferation of disinformation, misinformation and hate speech, thereby increasing the need for the dissemination of factual, timely, targeted, clear, accessible, multilingual and science - based information, and emphasizing the need for all Member States to stand together to address the challenges of disinformation and misinformation and hate speech;

Reaffirming that the dialogue among civilizations can play an important role in the promotion of common grounds among civilizations, recognition and promotion of the inherent dignity and of the equal rights of all human beings and, in this way, it can assist in dispelling notions of cultural superiority, and facilitate the building of a world as one human family;

Stressing the importance of creating synergy among the Istanbul Process, Rabat Plan of Action, Fez Action Plan, and taking into consideration the Marrakesh Declaration in this regard;

Reaffirming that there is no justification for violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, whatever the motivation, and that, violent extremism, in all its forms and manifestations cannot and should not be associated with any religion, race, nationality, civilization or ethnic group;

Emphasizing the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, as well as women's full, equal and effective participation in decision-making processes, for the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, sustainable development and peaceful and inclusive societies;

Reaffirming our support for UNAOC and its High Representative;

Appreciating the leadership and contributions of the members of the Group of Friends;

Expressing appreciation to previous host countries of UNAOC Global Forums: to Spain for The First Global Forum, (Madrid, January 2008); to Türkiye, for the Second Global Forum, (Istanbul, April 2009); to Brazil for the

Third Global Forum, (Rio, May 2010); to Qatar for the Fourth Global Forum, (Doha, December 2011); to Austria for the Fifth Global Forum, (Vienna, February 2013); to Indonesia for the Sixth Global Forum, (Bali, August 2014); and to Azerbaijan for the Seventh Global Forum (Baku, April 2016);

Welcoming the important contribution of the Eighth Global Forum (New York, November 2018) in the United Nations headquarters under the overarching theme: “Commit2Dialogue: Partnerships for Prevention and Sustaining Peace”;

Welcoming the continuing efforts made by the United Nations Secretary-General and the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations to strengthen the relationships between UNAOC and United Nations agencies, departments and other bodies;

Expressing appreciation to the regional and sub-regional organizations, which are members of the Group of Friends of UNAOC, and are carrying out activities in line with the objectives of UNAOC and its five pillars, namely youth, education, media, migration and women as peace makers;

Praising the Kingdom of Morocco, under the farsighted leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, as the host country of UNAOC Ninth Global Forum, for focusing the Fez Forum on the timely overarching theme “Towards An Alliance of Peace: Living Together as One Humanity” and reaffirming the importance of common and shared values as a unifying factor in a multi-divergent world through an informed debate on pathways to peace and living together in mutual respect and promoting an Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics;

Acknowledging the unique opportunity created by the Fez Forum to further deepen discussions and debates on preventing and combating violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, on the central role of education, on women as mediators and peace-makers, on combating discrimination and intolerance based on religion or belief anchored in human rights, on sport as a vector for peace and inclusiveness, on balancing migration narratives through programming, on the role of religious leaders in promoting peace, coexistence and social harmony, on reinvigorating multilateralism through culture of peace and on countering and addressing online hate speech;

1. Reaffirm political commitment to the five pillars of activity of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, mainly, youth, education, media migration and women as peace makers, acknowledges the work done in those areas, emphasizes its constructive role in promoting the values of conflict prevention, mediation and reconciliation, and encourages the Alliance to continue its work through a number of projects, in collaboration with governments, international organizations, foundations and civil society groups, as well as media;
2. Welcome the convening of the Ninth UNAOC Global Forum for the first time on the African Continent, and particularly in the heart of the historical city of Fez, a land of ancestral character and deep-rooted spiritualism and praising the host country, under the farsighted leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, a fervent advocate of values of peace and coexistence nationally and worldwide, for its full engagement and dedication to make the Fez Forum a fruitful space for promoting human interaction and fostering dialogue and peace;
3. Commend the High Representative’s efforts to incorporate arts, entertainment and sports programming as human expressions of intercultural bridge-building and diversity;
4. Commend the international initiatives, including those by UNESCO, designed to promote the safeguarding of cultural heritage in time of peace and in the event of armed conflicts, and encourage the members of the Group of Friends to condemn the unlawful destruction of cultural heritage and religious sites;

5. Underline the positive impact that migration can have on countries of origin, transit and destination, including through promoting cultural pluralism;
6. Encourage governments, international organizations and all other relevant stakeholders to consider tourism's contribution to the promotion of peace;
7. Welcome the submission of the rich and substantive report of the Secretary-General, entitled "Our Common Agenda", as a basis for further consideration by Member States and take notes that it recognizes the role of reinvigorated multilateralism and the importance to include the voices of religious leaders and faith-based organizations together with a whole array of actors who can engage in collective action;
8. Recognize that respect for the cultural diversity and cultural rights in accordance with international standards of all persons enhances cultural pluralism, contributing to a wider exchange of knowledge and understanding of cultural background, advancing the application and enjoyment of human rights throughout the world, and fostering stable, friendly relations among peoples and nations worldwide;
9. Express deep concern about the use of new information technologies, such as the Internet and social media, for purposes contrary to respect for human values, good neighborliness, equality, non-discrimination, and respect for others, including to propagate racism, hatred, xenophobia, racial discrimination and related intolerance, and that, in particular, children and youth having access to this material could be negatively influenced by it;
10. Recognize that information and communications technologies are fundamentally altering the way individuals and communities interact, consume and spend their time, with new and unforeseen health and social consequences, many of which are positive and some of which raise concerns;
11. Condemn any advocacy of hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, whether it involves the use of print, audiovisual or electronic media, social media or any other means;
12. Stress the need to develop and implement policies, action plans and strategies related to the promotion of media and information literacy, and to increase awareness, capacity for preventing, monitoring and countering disinformation, misinformation and hate speech;
13. Support the High Representative in his efforts and new initiatives to advance UNAOC programming as a tool for addressing conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, and foster reconciliation, and trust across communities, to forge peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development;
14. Emphasize that freedom of religion or belief and freedom of expression are interdependent, interrelated and mutually reinforcing; and stresses the role that these rights can play in the fight against all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief;
15. Stress the importance of implementing UNAOC's goals at the national level through the implementation of action plans at country level with the active leadership of governments and participation of civil society;
16. Encourage members of the Group of Friends to continue developing, updating, and implementing national strategies, and further encourage them to strengthen their efforts to collectively develop and implement regional strategies to enhance intercultural dialogue and cooperation across the African Continent, Asia and Pacific, the Mediterranean, South Eastern Europe, the Arab World and Latin America, and acknowledging the opportunity created by the Fez Forum to open new avenues for cooperation in this regard;



17. Underline the usefulness of the UNAOC Global Forums as platforms where international, regional and sub-regional organizations can share experiences and collaborate toward developing and implementing global and regional strategies for intercultural and interreligious dialogue and cooperation in support of the UNAOC's mission and objectives;
18. Welcome the High Representative High Level Advisory Council that would include, inter alia, eminent figures, political leaders, thought leaders and corporate sector figures to provide advice and recommendations to the High Representative;
19. Acknowledge the important role of UNAOC as a platform for intercultural and interreligious dialogue and as a space to foster cooperation, solidarity and human fraternity, and welcome its endeavor to serve as bridge-builder for promoting the shared values and principles of multilateralism that are essential to counter the tendency to establish blocs or zones of influence and to diffuse cultural and religious differences;
20. Encourage UNAOC to continue to strengthen and broaden its engagement with religious leaders and faith actors to provide them with opportunities for interfaith dialogue to promote tolerance, mutual respect and understanding, and reject violence;
21. Acknowledge with gratitude the significance of the continued financial commitments made by the Group of Friends, as well as other forms of support, stress the ongoing need for the timely and regular replenishment of the UNAOC Voluntary Trust Fund, and encourage the members of Group of Friends to consider making longer term pledges to ensure predictability of funds;
22. Welcome the new members of the Group of Friends of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations;
23. Acknowledge the leadership and contributions of Spain and Türkiye as the Co-Sponsors of the Alliance of Civilizations;
24. Express our conviction that the Fez Forum has achieved its main objective of making the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations a truly global undertaking, with universal aims and raising awareness to the urgent need to promote responsible leadership in all fields of action;
25. Recognize the important contribution to the debates, here in Fez, by youth, particularly African youth, and welcome their commitment to lead by example through involvement in UNAOC activities related to education, media and migration;
26. Call upon the full implementation of the announcements and commitments agreed in Fez Forum, so that Governments, with the support of the civil society, can overcome challenges and move forward towards the goals of living together in peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development;
27. Extend our gratitude to His Majesty King Mohammed VI, the Government and people of the Kingdom of Morocco, and the city of Fez, for hosting the Ninth Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, 22-23 November 2022.

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**(ADDENDUM)**

1. Welcome the offer of Equatorial Guinea to host the African regional meeting of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in 2023;
2. Welcome the offer made by Portugal to host the Tenth Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, to be held in Lisbon, in the year 2024;
3. Welcoming the work of the Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions as an international interreligious dialogue platform for the benefit of peace, and taking note of the Declaration of the Seventh Congress, held in Astana on 14 and 15 September 2022.