



**ASYA PARLAMENTER ASAMBLESİ (APA) TÜRK GRUBU  
ASIAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY (APA) TURKISH GROUP**



May 30, 2019

Excellency,

As you may recall, during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly, which was held in Istanbul; we, as the members of APA countries, initiated APA's membership to the Group of Friends of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UN AOC).

With your kind support, Turkey incorporated the membership issue to the Istanbul Declaration. Before the application process, we would like to provide you some information about UN AOC prepared by Turkey's APA Secretariat.

Please find attached a summary information regarding the UN AOC. In depth, information can also be found at [www.unaoc.org](http://www.unaoc.org).

We believe that APA member countries will greatly contribute to the UN AOC, which aims to bridge the gaps between societies, cultures and religions.

Thanking you in advance, I remain.

Kind Regards

Asuman ERDOĞAN  
Head of Turkish APA Group



*For details, the official web site of the UNAoC can be accessed on <https://www.unaoc.org/>*

## **History**

Initiated against the backdrop of the global war on terror, Huntington’s prediction of the clash of civilizations in the aftermath of 9/11 and the chain of bombing attacks that, in particular, targeted Bali, Madrid, Egypt, Istanbul and London in 2005, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) was created to improve understanding and cooperative relations among nations and peoples across cultures and religions — in particular, between the so-called Western and Muslim societies — and in the process, to help counter the forces that fuel polarization and extremism.

In spite of the conceptual controversies that it sparked from its inception, the Alliance – as a political initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations — generated an ever-growing support from countries, as well as from regional and international organizations. Between May 2007 and May 2011, UNAOC membership almost tripled, bringing together developed countries of the North and developing countries of the so-called global South, the East and the West. As of 2016, UNAOC membership of the Group of Friends has now reached 146 and counting.

To date, UNAOC has convened eight Global Forums: In Madrid in 2008, Istanbul in 2009, Rio de Janeiro in 2010, Doha in 2011, Vienna in 2013, Bali in 2014, Baku in 2016, and the UN Headquarters in New York in 2018. Those forums rendered UNAOC as one of the most relevant UN platforms for intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation by connecting governments, law makers, local authorities, civil society organizations, the media, and religious leaders devoted to promoting trust and understanding between diverse communities, specifically between Muslim and Western societies.

## **Governance and Leadership**

**H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos**

**High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations**

On January 2019, H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos assumed the post of High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, succeeding H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser. Mr. Moratinos has committed his professional and political activities to international relationships and development cooperation.

## **Group of Friends**

The Alliance benefits from a political support of the Group of Friends, a community of countries and international organizations which actively promotes the Alliance’s objectives and work at the global, regional and local levels, as well as worldwide. The Group is a driving force of

UNAOC and plays a vital role in the UNAOC's strategic planning and implementation process. Through a broad dialogue-based and consensus-building approach, the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations seeks the input, advice and support of the Group of Friends' members on all key aspects of UNAOC's activities and its mandate.

Our Group of Friends currently includes 146 Members of which are 119 UN Member States, 1 non-member state, and 26 international organizations. They represent all continents, societies and cultures.

### **Advisory Council**

The High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations is establishing UNAOC's Advisory Council of eminent personalities to provide guidance to all UNAOC activities. The Council will consist of leaders from the business sector, academia, the arts and literature, politics and religion.

### **Focal Points**

All members of the Group of Friends have been invited to appoint a Focal Point for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in their capitals or headquarters. Focal Points are officials working in Governments and international organizations who coordinate the UNAOC's related work in their institutions, facilitate and coordinate regular communication between each member of the Group of Friends and the Office of the UNAOC in New York. Through the network of Focal Points, the UNAOC benefits from national and international inputs and contribution to its strategic orientation, programmes and initiatives. The High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations convenes Focal Points annual meetings and working sessions in the framework of the annual forums of UNAOC.

### **Projects and Initiatives**

While active on a number of cross-cutting issues, UNAOC works mainly in four priority areas to which it brings a multidisciplinary and multi-perspective approach: Education, Media, Migration, and Youth. The main objectives of UNAOC's programme activities are to facilitate the global conversation on the challenges and opportunities for living in a landscape of diversity in our age of global communication and exchanges; prevent intercultural tensions and crises; combat stereotypes, misperceptions, discrimination and xenophobia; and support innovative grassroots initiatives that contribute to intercultural dialogue and understanding, mutual respect and cooperation across divides.

### **Trust Fund and Donors**

The United Nations Secretary-General has established a voluntary Trust Fund for UNAOC that supports the UNAOC projects, activities and outreach, undertaken by the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in his official capacity, and core operational and human resources needs. The special status and mandate of UNAOC have been recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in its Resolutions dated 10 November 2009 (A/RES/64/14) and 6 July 2015 (A/RES/69/312).