



League of Arab States

General Secretariat

Social Affairs Sector

Dialogue of Civilizations Department

Unified Arab Strategic Plan for Alliance of Civilizations

(2016-2019)

“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know each other. Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous. And Allah is the All-knowing, the All-aware.”

Surat El-Hujurat(49:13)

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Introduction

In 2005, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) Initiative was established under the direct purview of the UN Secretary General, based on an idea proposed by the Kingdom of Spain and Republic of Turkey.

To support and help the initiative realize its goals, “**Alliance of Civilizations Group of Friends**” was formed. Most Arab countries had acceded to this group since the first years of the initiative, out of belief in the noble principles and objectives the initiative adopts and seeks to realize, mainly, dissemination of the principles of coexistence and acceptance of the other; promotion of multiculturalism; laying the foundation of understanding, tolerance, dialogue and mutual respect among different cultures, civilizations, religions and peoples.

The Arab League and the member states were desirous to take part in all international forums of UNAOC through the high-level official representation or the presence of a panel of speakers in the primary and secondary sessions in these forums, given the multiple national efforts in this respect. The Arab countries have always offered all forms of required support for the Alliance in accordance with the outputs of “Alliance Partners’ Forum” held in Istanbul on 31 May 2015. The Arab countries, similar to other member states, paid contributions to the Alliance’s trust fund. These efforts culminated in hosting the 4th Alliance Forum in Qatar, as well as hosting several preliminary and preparatory meetings of these forums and the meetings of international focal points.

During the first five years of its inception, the Alliance of Civilizations appealed to and urged the Group of Friends to develop their **national plans** inclusive of programs, projects and activities that shall help realize the UNAOC goals in the four areas of focus: **education, youth, media, and migration**. Several Arab countries interacted actively and quickly with this appeal, and developed national plans that promoted understanding and coexistence among their cultures and civilizations and other cultures and peoples. These countries have substantially benefited from these plans. This motivated the Arab countries to prepare the “**second generation**” of these national plans.

In light of the success of the national plans of the member states, the Alliance of Civilizations urged countries members of regional groups and with proximate geographic nature to prepare **regional plans** that aim to strengthen relations and harmony among their peoples and cultures, as well as with the rest of the world.

In an endeavor to harmonize the efforts and visions of the Arab countries that have **common denominators**, mainly, **language, culture, civilization, history, geography and the same destiny**, the Arab League-represented by the Dialogue of Civilizations Department, Social Affairs Sector- coordinated with the Arab member states from the Group of Friends to prepare this “ **unified Arab strategic plan for alliance of civilizations**” as a joint Arab action according to the Arab League decisions in this respect; the most recent is Decision no. (7904) issued in its ordinary session held on 9 March 2015.

This plan comprises **four** elements: **Introduction** which is an essential part of the plan; **Core Principles** on which the plan is based; **Objectives** the plan seeks to realize; and an array of **joint programs and activities** that the member states shall implement. A **four-year** timeframe (2016 -2019) was developed; once completed, the plan, its programs and activities shall be assessed.

Anchors of the Plan

This plan is based on an array of principles, articles and items related to international charters, declarations, and statements as primary fundamentals and tenets, as follows:

- 1) Divine religions, especially Islam, which calls for peace, tolerance, coexistence, acceptance of the other, and denunciation of violence, fanaticism, extremism, terrorism, and racial discrimination.
- 2) League of Arab States Charter issued in Cairo on 22 March 1945, especially Article (2).
- 3) United Nations Charter signed on 26 June 1945 and all relevant United Nations resolutions.
- 4) Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted on 10 December 1948.
- 5) Arab Charter on Human Rights adopted in the 16th Arab Summit (23 May 2004).
- 6) Decisions and statements issued by the Arab Summits as well as the relevant Arab ministerial decisions.
- 7) United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) Strategic Plan (2013-2018).
- 8) Declarations and recommendations issued by the six international forums prior to Alliance of Civilizations.

- 9) Principle of self-determination right of the Palestinian people suffering under the yoke of occupation and emphasis on preservation of the identity of East Jerusalem which is the cradle of divine religions and sacred places.

Objectives

Through the joint programs and activities, a set of objectives shall hopefully be realized by the end of the four- year plan, as follows:

- 1) Enhance the bridges of communication among the different civilizations in general, and between the Arab civilization and other civilizations in particular.
- 2) Promote understanding between Arab and other nations.
- 3) Promote cooperation among Arab countries, in a manner that helps realize the initiative objectives.
- 4) Optimize the use of human potentials and economic resources to realize the common goals of Arab countries relative to alliance of civilizations.
- 5) Highlight the main Arab cause, namely, the 'Palestinian Question' to contribute to a fair solution.
- 6) Mentally address extremism, violence, and terrorism phenomena, and address the underlying reasons for their escalation.
- 7) Raise awareness and promote recognition of the need to observe the fine line between freedom of opinion and expression on one hand, and defamation of religions and profanity on the other hand.

Joint Programs and Activities

To complement the efforts of the Arab countries in the area of alliance of civilizations through the adopted national plans, the following joint Arab programs and activities shall be implemented through this plan in four areas of focus in the initiative: youth, media, education, and migration.

These programs and activities are financed in collaboration and coordination with the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States (LAS) and the hosting or organizing country according to the applicable controls and criteria in this respect.

I. Name of Program: Arab League Youth Forum of Alliance of Civilizations

Objectives and Themes:

- Main theme: Alliance of civilizations
- Subthemes: Harmonize these themes with those on the agenda of UNAOC initiative.

Participants:

Invited parties:

- Youth from all Arab countries.
- Youth , representatives of the regional geographical groups of the United Nations(UN) member states (Africa/Asia, Latin America and Caribbean/Western European and other countries OEWG(Open-ended working group)/ Eastern Europe)

Age Groups:

- First segment: 18 -24 years old
- Second segment: 25 -36 years old

Organizing Agency:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
- Hosting Country: Arab countries desirous to host the forum.
- UNAOC Secretariat

Periodicity:

- Biannual (winter and summer)

Period of time:

- 2 -3 weeks.

Associated activities:

- Youth Theatre Festival for Intercultural Convergence
- Youth Music Festival under the theme: Heritage is a pillar for intercultural dialogue
- Art Fair Project
- Arab Language Dialogue Forum

II. Name of Program: A monthly TV program “ Arab Media Mission for Alliance of Civilizations”**Overview:**

A TV program is to be presented and shall host Arab youth together with youth who represent the regional geographical groups of United Nations member states.

Objectives and Themes:

- Main theme: Alliance of civilizations
- Subthemes:
 - Introduction of Islamic Arab civilization and recognition of other civilizations.
 - Demonstration of the life of an Arab young man hosted by a foreign family and vice versa.

Participants:**Invited Parties:**

- University students from all the Arab countries in cooperation with university students who represent the regional geographical groups of United Nations member states (Africa/Asia/Latin America and the Caribbean/ Western European and other countries- OEWG/ Eastern Europe).

Age Groups:

- 18-30 years old.

Organizing Agencies:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
- Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU)
- UNAOI Initiative Secretariat
- Arab States UNAOI Focal Points Committee

Periodicity:

- Monthly

Period of time:

- Two-hour episodes live on air.

**III. Name of Program: “Arab League and Alliance of Civilizations Seminar ...
A message to men of media”**

Objectives and Themes:

- Definition of the goals and role of UNAOC
- Promotion of a positive media message in line with the principles and objectives of the Arab and international Alliance of Civilizations Initiative

Participants:

Invited Parties:

- Men of media from all Arab countries (with focus on young men of media)
- Men of media from the regional geographical groups of UN member states (Africa/Asia/ Latin America and Caribbean/ Western European and other countries OEWG/ Eastern Europe).

Age Groups:

- Men of media from different age groups.

Organizing Agencies:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
- Egypt’s State Information Service (SIS)
- UNAOC Initiative Secretariat
- Arab States UNAOC Focal Points Committee

Periodicity:

- Annually held.

Period of time:

- Two days synchronous with the World Day for Cultural Diversity on 21 May every year (in **implementation of United Nations Resolution no. 249/57**).

IV. Name of Program: “Alliance of Civilizations ...a point within a page” website

Overview:

A network is established to link the Arab media entities with their counterparts from other regional geographical groups.

Objectives and themes:

- Alliance of Civilizations: Inception, objectives and activities
- Introduction of the Arab programs and activities incorporated in the unified Arab strategic plan (2016 -2019).
- Communication with the Arab men of media and their counterparts from the other regional geographical groups.

Participants:

- Arab men of media and their counterparts from other geographical groups.

Age Groups:

- All age groups.

Organizing agencies:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
- Egypt’s State Information Service(SIS)
- UNAOC Initiative Secretariat
- Arab States UNAOC Focal Points Committee

Periodicity:

- Creation and periodic monitoring of the informative page.

V. Name of Program: General Secretariat Project on Guide for Authors of history textbooks in Europe and the Arab and Islamic Worlds “ A joint path”

Overview:

Adoption of a multiple and fair perspective in the presentation of the history, culture, and religion of the other to the learners, paving the way to a new approach that encourages the culture of peace and understanding, and seeks to entrench alliance of civilizations as a component of educational and pedagogical processes.

Age Groups:

- School and university students in Europe and the Arab and Islamic Worlds.

Organizing Agencies:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States

- UNESCO
- The Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue Between Cultures
- The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO)
- Swedish Institute in Alexandria

VI. Name of Program: Arab League Award for United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

Objectives and themes:

Main theme: Alliance of civilizations

Subthemes:

- Enrich and enhance the culture of co-existence among different cultures and civilizations, contributing to realize the general benefit to the human community at large at present and in the future.
- Provide and exchange information and pioneering experiences in the four areas of education, youth, migration, and media.
- Operationalize the common denominators to resolve issues of interest to humanity with a purpose to strengthen peaceful coexistence and understanding among different cultures and civilizations and help realize the post-2015 development agenda.
- Encourage researchers and relevant institutions to fruitfully interact with a purpose to reach new horizons of dialogue as a means to propagate peace, cooperation and peaceful coexistence.

Participants:

Invited parties:

- Arab institutions, research centers, and organizations interested in the different issues related to alliance of civilizations.
- Arab officials, scientists, and men of intellect with prominent contributions in the different issues related to alliance of civilizations.

Age Groups:

- Individuals:
 - All age groups
- Institutions:
 - All institutions operating in this field.

Organizing Agencies:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
- UNAOC Initiative Secretariat
- Arab States UNAOC Focal Points Committee

Periodicity:

- The Arab States UNAOC Focal Points Committee shall identify the individuals and agencies that receive the annual award.

Period of Time:

- One day to present the awards during the Annual UNAOC Forum.

VII. Name of Program: Project on creation of university chairs in alliance of civilizations

Overview:

Creation of specialized university chairs at Arab universities to strengthen the alliance of civilization principles and entrench the values of justice and peace.

Objectives and themes:

- Propagate the essence and dimensions of alliance of civilizations in Arab universities and research centers through teaching an alliance of civilization course.
- Conduct relevant research and studies.

Participants:

Invited Parties:

- University professors from all Arab states.
- University professors from the regional geographical groups of UN member states (Africa/Asia/Latin America and the Caribbean/Western European and other countries OEWG/ Eastern Europe).

Organizing Agencies:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States in coordination with the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO)
- Universities in Arab countries
- UNAOC Initiative Secretariat
- Arab States UNAOC Focal Points Committee

Periodicity:

- University semesters

Associated activities:

Art/literary competitions in the area of alliance of civilizations

- Plastic Arts Competition

- A research completion under the theme “Know one another” with the purpose to shed light on the different civilizations and their contributions.

Purpose of competitions:

- Introduction of Arab culture
- Translate the cultural heritage of Arab cultures into visual expression
- Develop a sense of national consciousness
- Develop a taste for plastic arts to enrich the civilization and culture in the visual arts.

Participants:

Invited Parties:

- Teachers and students from all Arab countries as well as regional geographical groups of the UN member states (Africa/Asia/ Latin America and the Caribbean/ Western European and other countries-OEWG/ Eastern Europe).

Organizing Agencies:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
- UNAOC Initiative Secretariat
- Arab States UNAOC Focal Points Committee
- Arab countries desirous to organize these competitions.

Periodicity:

- Annual.

VIII. Name of Program: Online Direct Communication Activities

Overview:

An online dialogue forum (School Video Conference) is held, combining school students from a given Arab country with students from a foreign country.

Objectives and themes:

- Alliance of civilizations
- Comparison of the curricula in different countries.
- Introduction of Arab culture and knowledge of other cultures.

Participants:

Invited Parties:

- Secondary school students in all Arab countries and their counterparts in the regional geographical groups of UN member states (Africa/Asia/Latin America and the Caribbean/Western European and other countries- OEWG/ Eastern Europe).

Organizing Agencies:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
- UNAOC Initiative Secretariat
- Arab States UNAOC Focal Points Committee

Periodicity:

- During the school year.

Period of time:

- The dialogue lasts for an hour and a half or two hours.

IX. Name of Program: “ In Search of Understanding” Initiative

Objectives and themes:

- Main theme: Alliance of civilization
- Subthemes:
 - Surmount the issues arising from misunderstanding and wrong impressions among different nations.
 - Emphasis the common grounds that unite the one human family and highlight the potential to build on these grounds.
 - Propagate the concept of “the culture of peace” and peaceful coexistence consistent with the UN General Assembly Declaration and Program on the Culture of Peace in September 1999.
 - Emphasis the need to spare no effort to conquer the wave of evil and devastation that hits more regions in the world, without slipping into the vicious circle that seeks ineffective solutions, and without falling into the circle of violence and counter-violence.
 - Highlight the efforts of the supportive agencies to present the initiative in the abovementioned three forums to the international public opinion through the media and the internet, contributing to create a better world for the one human family.

Participants:

Invited Parties:

- Multilateral diplomacy staff in the United Nations offices in New York, Geneva and Paris.

Age Groups:

- All age groups.

Organizing Agencies:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
- International “In Search of Understanding” Initiative
- UNAOC Initiative Secretariat
- Arab States UNAOC Focal Points Committee

Periodicity:

- Annual

Period of time:

- One day (apart from travel, and preparation for the event).

X. Name of Program: Study circle meetings on the role of civil society in promotion of alliance of civilizations

Objectives and themes:

- Main theme: Alliance of civilizations
- Subthemes:
 - Highlight the role of the civil society in promotion of alliance of civilizations through collaborative efforts with the purpose to introduce an effective change in sustainable development processes.
 - Discuss the issue and means of development with experts and interest groups in the Arab Region.
 - Present the experience of successful youth organizations as well as an overview of the creative ideas of youth of the age group 18 -30 years to share the experience with the participating youth.

Participants:

Invited Parties:

- Youth from all Arab countries.
- Arab civil society organizations in the area of alliance of civilizations nominated by the Arab States Focal Points Committee.
- International civil society organizations in the area of alliance of civilizations, nominated by the UNAOC Initiative Secretariat.

Age Groups:

- First segment: 18 -24 years old
- Second segment: 25 – 36 years old

Organizing Agencies:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
- UNAOC Initiative Secretariat
- Arab States UNAOC Focal Points Committee

Periodicity:

- Annual

Period of time:

- Two days

XI. Name of Program: An Arab Workshop under the theme :” A better world with alliance of civilizations”

Objectives and themes:

- Main theme: Alliance of civilizations
- Subthemes: Participants are divided into working groups to cover the following areas:
 - Significance and essence of the human communication through alliance of civilizations
 - Correlation between positive thinking and development of trends towards alliance of civilizations
 - Impact of alliance of civilizations on development of personal capacities.

Participants:

Invited Parties:

- UNESCO associated schools in the Arab countries
- UNESCO associated schools in the regional geographical groups of the UN member states (Africa/Asia/Latin America and the Caribbean/ Western European and other countries –OEWG/ Eastern Europe).

Age Groups:

- First segment: All age groups
- Second segment: 15 -18 years old

Organizing Agencies:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
- Ministry of Education, Arab Republic of Egypt
- UNESCO Regional Office
- Department in charge of the activities of UNESCO associated schools in the country desirous to host the event

- Arab States UNAOC Focal Points Committee

Periodicity:

- Biannual:
 - First: To UNESCO activities officers at schools
 - Second: To students at UNESCO associated schools

Period of time:

- Three days per program

Associated activities:

- Some publications about the prominent features of different civilizations.

XII. Name of Program: Handicrafts Workshop

Overview:

A workshop is held on famous handicrafts (carving on metal, copper making, pottery making, and handmade carpets) in the respective country where artisans from different countries shall participate. A theoretical review of handicrafts shall be presented including their history, and stages of development, followed by a practical presentation of how to practice a craft.

Objectives and themes:

- Introduction of handicrafts in the different countries.
- Conservation of popular heritage and preservation from extinction
- A step towards organization of major handicrafts fairs in the future.

Participants:

Invited Parties:

- One or maximum 3 artisans who practice a craft from all Arab countries as well as the regional geographical groups of UN member states (Africa/Asia/Latin America and the Caribbean/ Western European and other countries- OEWG/ Eastern Europe).

Age Groups:

- All age groups.

Organizing Agencies:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
- Arab countries desirous to host the event.
- UNAOC Secretariat

Periodicity:

- Once a year.

Period of time:

- A week.

XIII. Name of Program: Young Innovators Fair

Overview:

An annual fair for young inventors from different Arab countries and representatives from the regional geographical groups of UN member states where the youth present their inventions and explain the benefit or contribution to the community.

Objectives and themes:

- Encourage youth to be innovative.
- Review of the inventions and innovations of the youth that do not see light and lack support.
- Adopt the new innovations and reduce any impediments.
- Select the best invention every year and award a prize. The Arab League shall practically apply and execute the invention.

Participants:

Invited Parties:

- Three young inventors from every Arab country.
- Youth representing the regional geographical groups of UN member states (Africa/Asia/Latin America and the Caribbean/ Western European and other countries- OEWG/ Eastern Europe).

Organizing Agencies:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
- Arab countries desirous to host the event.
- UNAOC Secretariat

Periodicity:

- Once a year.

Period of time:

- A week.

XIV. Name of Program: League of Arab States Forum for Migration and Alliance of Civilizations

Overview:

The Forum presents an approach towards the role of migrant communities in promotion of alliance of civilizations through activities, seminars, workshops, and fairs, contributing to a rational vision that places migration in the right framework and deems it a means to secure intercultural convergence and enrichment.

Objectives and themes:

- **Goal:**
 - Contribute to strengthen dialogue among peoples and alliance of civilizations.
- **Objectives:**
 - Positive contribution of migration in promotion of alliance of civilizations;
 - Highlight the importance and role of migrant communities in promotion of alliance of civilizations;
 - Consider the successful experiences of coexistence and respect of the other;
 - Familiarize others with the Arab culture and civilization with their major elements;
 - Learn about the cultures and civilizations of other nations;
 - Consider mechanisms for further utilization of migration as an avenue of communication and coexistence among peoples.

Participants:

Invited Parties:

- Arab countries.
- Arab communities outside the Arab Region according to the following indicative criteria:
 - An Arab migrant active in the area of cultural and civilizational convergence;
 - Observance of the constants of the Arab Nation and the tenor of League of Arab States Charter;
 - The migrant shall preserve his/her nationalist affiliation.
- Foreign communities affiliated to UN member states and resident in Arab countries.
- Regional geographical groups of UN member states.

Age Groups:

- All age groups.

Organizing Agencies:

- General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
- An Arab country desirous to organize the forum, especially those countries with large communities abroad
- UNAOC Initiative Secretariat

Period of time:

- 4 days

Associated Activities:

- Seminars, presentations, meetings, and workshops on:
 - Role of the migrant communities in promotion of alliance of civilizations
 - Successful experiences in coexistence and respect of the other
 - Introduction of the components, diversity and richness of Arab culture and civilization
 - Exposure to and learning about the cultures and civilizations of other nations.
- Organize cultural and art fairs and activities that highlight human cultural richness and diversity.