

WFID 2015 Sharing Culture for Shared Security

3rd World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue.

18-19 May 2015, Baku, Azerbaijan

Concept and Programme

WFID 2015 Sharing Culture for Shared Security

Baku Process¹

Culture connects people of difference, and connection enables encounter and exchange. Dialogue between cultures can become a powerful antidote to rejection and violence, by enabling people to live together peacefully and constructively in a multicultural world, with a sense of global community and belonging.

Dialogue among Civilizations²

The Baku Process comprises open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage, living on different continents, on the basis of mutual understanding and respect.

A distinctive feature of this process is that it brings together people of difference, in terms of origins and heritage, education, culture and ethnicity through projects and programs in the field of culture and dialogue. Another important feature is that this process is supported by a global partnership and is mobilized by the Government of Azerbaijan in cooperation with UNESCO, UN Alliance of Civilizations, UN World Tourism Organization, the Council of Europe, ISESCO, and Heydar Aliyev Foundation, together creating a powerful and constructive network of international organizations and NGOs.

The contribution of the Baku Process to the path of human civilization is indispensable, given its role in consolidating operation, coexistence, peace, love, tolerance and cross-cultural bonds among peoples and nations

¹ The “Baku Process” for the promotion of intercultural dialogue was initiated by H.E. President Ilham Aliyev, of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the *Conference of Ministers of Culture of Europe and its Neighboring Regions* held in Baku on 2-3 December, 2008.

² Based on the global agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (2001); the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) and Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005); the Islamic Declaration on Cultural Diversity, which was issued by ISESCO in 2004; Declaration and Action Plan of the Third Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe member states, the Council of Europe White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (May 2008); Baku Declaration for Intercultural Dialogue (December 2008)

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Objectives of the Baku Process

- To promote understanding and dialogue within and between cultures;
- To increase co-operation, in particular but not exclusively between Muslim and Western societies;
- To build respect and understanding among cultures and amplify voices for moderation, reconciliation and for pluralism which help calm cultural, religious and other tensions between peoples;
- To define the opportunities of using culture, cultural heritage and the arts more pervasively and effectively in the process of actively promoting intercultural dialogue and cooperation as well as practical actions;
- To support cultural and artistic activities and exchanges and recognize the role of artists and creators-as catalysts of dialogue and mutual understanding;
- To create opportunity for intercultural dialogue through concerted actions between the competent international and regional organizations, with the active involvement of the member states concerned, civil society and wherever possible private sectors.

Since 2008 after launching of the Baku Process, many international high level events and activities have been organized in Baku.

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3rd World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue (WFID 2015)

18-19 May 2015, Baku, Azerbaijan

Under the patronage of H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in cooperation with UNESCO, UN Alliance of Civilizations, UN World Tourism Organization, Council of Europe (including the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe) and ISESCO, the 3rd World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue will be held on May 18-19, 2015 in Baku, the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue has become a key global platform for dialogue between people, as Azerbaijan is one of the unique places where different cultures and civilizations meet at the crossroads between the East and the West, the North and the South. At the same time, being a member of both Islamic and European organizations, Azerbaijan absorbs the values of both civilizations, thus enabling it to assume a role of genuine bridge.

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The 3rd World Forum will have a major concern for culture and sustainable development in the post 2015 development agenda and will focus primarily on projects and programmes dedicated to the 21st of May World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development declared by the UN General Assembly, as well as the role of faith, religions, migration, sport, education, and business in building trust and cooperation among cultures and civilisations.

The theme of the 3rd World Forum reflects the significance of global security in 2015 and the global attention placed on the security of vulnerable people at a time of significant human insecurity.

Placing intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity higher on the international agenda is critical for human security and a prime responsibility of our time. World Forums organised so far have brought together heads of governments, ministers, heads of various international organizations, senior policy makers, cultural professionals, goodwill ambassadors, experts, journalists, practitioners, prominent intellectuals and activists. The World Forums have become an international platform to enable and encourage people, countries and organizations around the world to take concrete actions to support diversity, dialogue and mutual understanding among and between nations and communities by raising awareness of the importance of dialogue.

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The 1st World Forum hosted in April in 2011 organised under the theme of “*Unity through Common Values, Enriched by Cultural Diversity*” and launched the commitment of the partners to the positives of diversity with a focus on common ground and values. The 2nd Forum built on this seeking to mobilise a global responsibility of “*Living together peacefully in a diverse world.*”³

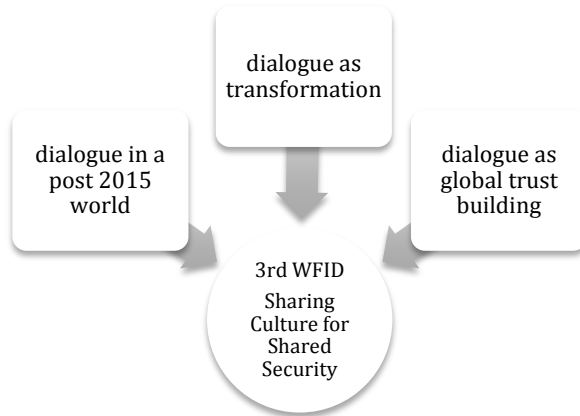
This 3rd World Forum focuses centrally on human security and seeks to place emphasis on the power and importance of sharing our different cultures in open and giving exchange, whilst recognising that sustaining human security must be a fully shared responsibility; a responsibility for neighbours and communities, for educators and faith leaders, for national and regional governments as well as for international organisations: “***Sharing Culture for Shared Security***”.

In developing its theme, the 3rd Forum is proposing an agenda framed around three interlinked issues:

³ Azerbaijan hosted the 1st World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue on 7-9 April, 2011, as announced by H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan at the 65th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (23 September 2010, New-York). The Forum addressed challenges of intercultural dialogue in its various aspects regarding conceptual frameworks, governance, policy and practice. It tackled the barriers to dialogue and faced concretely how dialogue can best be pursued in diverse contexts and provided an opportunity for sharing of good practices and the launch of new initiatives within this intercultural platform. 500 representatives from 102 countries from all continents, many international organization, NGOs, media representatives, scholars, experts and etc. participated in the Forum organized under the motto - "United Through Common Values, Enriched by Cultural Diversity".

The 2nd World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue was held on 29 May-01 June 2013, Baku, Azerbaijan under the motto "Living together peacefully in a diverse world". The programme comprised several sessions, such as "How to build the world future together?", "How to build the popular support for cultural diversity?", The New Era of Globalization: Hybridity of cultures in changing world, "Supporting Intercultural Actions". Moreover, The Forum featured side events prepared and led by partner organizations, including the celebration of "Do one thing for Diversity and Inclusion", the Intercultural Innovation Award ceremony for Central Asia, Black Sea and Mediterranean regions, the 1st Alumni Summit of the "Emerging Leaders", a conference of "Global Network Towards a global intercultural cities learning community", the workshop "Intercultural Dialogue through History Teaching: Best Practices and Challenges", as well as the sessions "Tourism as a key driver of mutual understanding and tolerance among cultures", and "intercultural dialogue through faith and science".

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Dialogue in a post-2015 world

WFID 2015 will celebrate the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development. Purposeful and successful intercultural dialogue in a post-2015 world will be an essential toolkit helping people to cope with the unprecedented challenges and pace of change in our modern world. Tools and capabilities that recognize dialogue as dynamic and engaging –focused on open and respectful exchange of views, experiences, hopes and fears, will support successful intercultural dialogue. Consistent with the theme developed at the 2013 Forum, this sharing ultimately provides the basis of better understanding and the stronger prospect of living peacefully in diverse communities. In our commitment to shared security, all must work to encourage and enable dialogue, sometimes in contexts where the various players seem to be at odds with one another. Governments, both at regional and national levels are strongly placed to promote cultural diversity and social cohesion, through rights-based strategies and the responsibility to protect. Civil society actors and other practitioners though sometimes alienated from the political process can nonetheless promote dialogue as an essential social skill based on lived experience in (sometimes very local) neighborhoods.

At WFID 2015, this sub-theme will explore the role of ‘soft power’ and the positive value of diversity. Recognizing and protecting cultural rights is fully consistent with the understanding of diversity as strength in contemporary communities and societies –and not just for economic benefit. This issue will include discussion on the importance of the media, training tools and frameworks for the promotion of intercultural competences. Side events will look at how tourism can mobilize encounters and exchanges, and an Academic Forum of UNESCO Chairs will discuss approaches to, and strategies for, Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue.

This sub-theme will address, and seek answers to, the question of why and how dialogue is powerful in its own right. Dialogue can be explored as a process that promotes the forces for pluralism and erodes those for prejudice. Intercultural dialogue in the post-2015 era will occur in a context of particularly sensitive cultural

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relationships, open to different and sometimes contradictory, interpretations. Mutual respect – which is not the same as mutual approval - is crucial. Reasoned disagreement builds stronger, more authentic, and lasting relationships. Avoiding difficult questions (such as political conflict or differences in values) is counterproductive: addressing them directly and with respect builds trust. In the post-2015 era, human security will focus on the needs of vulnerable people, inequality, and disparity areas within which prejudice and stereotypes will need to be challenged.

We often generalise about what we do not know. Stereotypes are usually exaggerated views of particular characteristics, which result from our own cultural frames of reference. It becomes a problem when such generalisations become prejudices that affect the way we act towards others.

Intercultural dialogue is important as it allows long-term and intensive engagement with people from other cultures. This can help people see their own culture from a different perspective, which leads to re-evaluating their own views and ideas. On the other hand, dialogue also re-introduces some of the details – the diversity – into our perception of others.

Dialogue as transformation

Linking dialogue with transformation is important as it highlights that deep structural, behavioral and attitudinal change is required for transformation to take place. This requires much more than words and statements; it is rather a new social compact with economic, political and personal dimensions. This sub-theme at WFID 2015 will focus on both religion and education.

Religion has emerged as a significant component within intercultural dialogue globally, and we now have the opportunity to better question the meaning and practice of religious diversity and tolerance in context. Religion and faith form the backdrop to the day-to-day lives of the majority of the world's population, and the Forum presents a unique opportunity to approach some of the key current intercultural debates of global significance through the lens of belief. One of the plenary discussions focuses directly on the inter-section between religion and violent extremism.

The Forum can reflect on some very successful international initiatives that seek to engage effectively across different religious or faith communities. These tend to deal with some of the complexities in relations between world religions and their leaders, or internally to those groups (intra- and inter-faith initiatives).

These conversations between 'religions' clearly play a central role in inter-cultural dialogue and for human security generally, and they provide a clearer understanding of the role that faith can, and will, play in rapidly changing and

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globalized 21st century societies. However, the differing cultural contexts of faith do not simply come down to understanding differing cultural practices, values or doctrinal stances within communities – it is actually a far bigger picture of the changing nature of the role of faith in the private and public sphere and in individual, community, national or trans-national identity.

The intercultural dialogue which is necessary, in terms of international relations, needs to go much further than these positive inter-change's between differing faith groups or faith leaders. There is a vital and timely need to have clearer picture of the differing perspectives on the role of faith in both the private and public sphere globally – and how this impacts on individuals, institutions, systems of governance and international relations.

The role of faith in public affairs is a potentially contentious issue in international and cultural relations. It could be argued that the role of faith in society is central to some of the most pressing, contemporary international political and security issues/debates. However, in an increasingly pluralist and globalized world, building a more nuanced cross-cultural picture of the role that faith plays in our societies may help to tackle some of the preconceptions that drive certain tensions at home and internationally – particularly in a multi-polar world where assumptions about the global order are being challenged.

The role of intercultural dialogue in this sphere should seek to move from simply bringing faith leaders together towards seriously engaging with misconceptions and polarizing narratives concerning the nature of secular governance and the role of belief, faith and religion in society.

Dialogue as Global Trust Building

Looking more closely at the rapidly unfolding modernity and global economy, two of the most remarkable aspects are related to demographics and the way in which people connect. The measurable and increasingly important role of younger people combines with a growth in interaction among people around the world generally. Both these realities reflect that we are increasingly connecting with each other, and at the same time becoming interdependent more quickly than ever before. We are doing so against a backcloth of unprecedented faster, deeper and broader economic growth, which is being played out daily, and emphatically, in nations and communities worldwide.

In this context, the responsibilities of local and national governments, and, importantly international organisations both of government and in the third sector should be crucial success factors.

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The pursuit of a 'shared security' requires the involvement of all stakeholders –and the challenges are formidable. The notion of security in our world remain dominated by the traditional discourse of 'war and peace', in which national (often military) security continues to overshadow the more human dimensions on which the Baku Process has placed emphasis. Within the tradition of national security, the security of the state has become the overriding focus for attention –which by itself does not always secure the security of people living within the state –often as a result of rapidly diversifying populations.

Processes of building trust on a global scale and with global reach recognise the real contribution that the acknowledgement of shared and common vulnerabilities have, alongside our shared and common responsibilities to address them.

The Forum will help us to explore one key factor in the approach to building such trust the need to understand both those issues and characteristics that we share and have in common –our *commonalities*, and the need to grow our understanding of the sources of tensions between communities; it seems as important, then to understand each other's insecurities –and governments and international organisations can play a lead role here.

A set of parallel workshops focused on young people.

These will enable the Forum to maintain continuity and momentum of the commitment within the wider Baku process to the importance of young people as both catalyst form positive change and as the successor generation.

It is youth that has the heightened the awareness of our differences, and who probably develop most quickly the defensive strategies that protect identities and a sense of belonging. It is young people who embrace the potentials of new technologies most quickly and whose aspirations are most readily dampened by an economic growth that widens disparities, stunts social mobility and promises much, but delivers little. Most importantly, when the uneven distribution of the gains from growth run mainly along cultural lines, divisions can be deepened, and even new ones introduced.

Three important questions will be addressed under this sub-theme: firstly, the role of young people as agents of change and as positive contributors to peace and dialogue processes. Secondly, questions about how well we understand and can learn from the way young people engage in dialogue through social media and digital platforms, and thirdly, the role of youth in the responsible use of digital media.

Providing a strong platform for young people to be showcased as positive and progressive contributors to intercultural dialogue will be an important and continuing

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deliverable as the WFID moves forwards, along with the Baku process more generally.

OPENING CEREMONY

18 May, 2015, 10:00-11:30, Heydar Aliyev Center

Opening speech by

H.E. Mr. Ilham ALIYEV, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Speakers:

- 1. H.E. Nassir Abdulaziz AL-NASSER**, High Representative of the UN Secretary General
- 2. H.E. Irina BOKOVA**, Director General of The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- 3. H.E. Iyad bin Amin MADANI**, Secretary general of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)
- 4. H.E. Abdulaziz Ottoman ALWAIJRI**, Director General of Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO)

Plenary Session 1: Dialogue in post-2015 world

Sharing Culture for Shared Security: Soft power and diversity in the modern age

Org: Azerbaijan with Partners

Brief: This 3rd World Forum focuses centrally on human security and seeks to place emphasis on the power and importance of sharing our different cultures in open and giving exchange, whilst recognising that sustaining human security must be a fully shared responsibility; a responsibility for neighbours and communities, for educators and faith leaders, for national and regional governments as well as for international organisations: this first Plenary Session explores approaches to sharing cultures for shared security that place emphasis on the use of dialogue, persuasion, being attractive and accepting to others –all characteristics of so-called ‘soft-power’ with a

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real potential for changing the interaction between nation-states as well as between communities of difference. This first plenary will also celebrate the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development: purposeful and successful intercultural dialogue in a post-2015 world will be an essential toolkit helping people to cope with the unprecedented challenges and pace of change in our modern world. Tools and capabilities that recognize dialogue as dynamic and engaging – focused on open and respectful exchange of views, experiences, hopes and fears, will support successful intercultural dialogue

Working together to encourage and enable dialogue, sometimes in contexts where the various players seem to be at odds with one another is a product of a 'soft-power' approach. Governments, both at regional and national levels are strongly placed to promote cultural diversity and social cohesion, through rights-based strategies and the responsibility to protect. Civil society actors and other practitioners though sometimes alienated from the political process can nonetheless promote dialogue as an essential social skill based on lived experience in (sometimes very local) neighborhoods.

Key questions:

In a fresh and innovative approach to the potential of 'soft power' in global affairs and intercultural relations, the panel will elaborate understanding and experience of the context of diversity and in the context of the real and positive benefits that such diversity can bring to communities and neighbourhoods. The challenge of living with 'shared security' requires a stronger accommodation of individual cultural rights and characteristics in public life, supported by the mechanisms of laws, education, common use of language and languages and the issues of protected cultural identities, respect for religious belief and practice and preservation of collective memory.

Format: The plenary session will be of 60 minutes in length with experts in the field of religion and conflict providing theoretical and practical perspectives on religion and countering violent extremism. The presentations will be followed with a 30 minutes of moderated questions and answers session.

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Chair: **H.E. Mehriban ALIYEVA**, President of Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO and ISESCO (tbc)

Moderator: **Prof. Mike Hardy CMG OBE**, Chair in Intercultural Relations, Executive Director, Center For Trust, Peace and Social Relations, Coventry University, United Kingdom

Speakers:

1. **Nabil ELARABY**, Secretary General of the League of Arab States
2. **Margarita POPOVA**, Vice-President of the Republic of Bulgaria
3. **Nada AI-NASHIF**, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO
4. **Jean-Christophe BAS**, Director of Democratic Citizenship and Participation, Council of Europe
5. **Ömer ÇELİK**, Minister of Culture and Tourism, Turkey
6. **Rabbi Marc SCHNEIER**, President of Foundation for Ethnic Understanding, USA

Plenary Session 2: Dialogue as transformation

Countering Violent Extremism and the Role of Religious Leaders in Promoting Religious Pluralism and Advancing Shared Well-being

Org: UN Alliance of Civilizations

Brief: In recent weeks and months, we have seen an alarming rise in the wave of violent extremism, radicalisation, terrorist attacks and incitement to hatred. Such unjustifiable acts have culminated into targeted killings of innocent people from different faiths, perpetuating stereotyping, xenophobia and racism. Violent extremism is “driven” by a variety of factors. To effectively respond to the “drivers” of violent religious extremism, a multi-stakeholder approach is needed, with governments, civil society, and religious communities each playing their decisive and complementary roles.

Key Questions to be addressed: The plenary session will analyse the various factors that are “drivers” to violent extremism and recommend concrete and effective responses, not just to violent extremism but the “drivers” as well. The session will focus on the needed collaboration among diverse religious

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communities, governments and the United Nations to combat the drivers of violent extremism and uphold the dignity of all people.

Format: The plenary session will be of 60 minutes in length with experts in the field of religion and conflict providing theoretical and practical perspectives on religion and countering violent extremism. The presentations will be followed with a 30 minutes of moderated questions and answers session.

Chair: **H.E. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser**, The High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)

Moderator: **Nihal Saad**, Spokesperson for the UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations

Speakers:

1. **Tariq Al-Ansari**, Ambassador, Chief of Cabinet of the Office of the HR
2. **Mubariz Gurbanli**, Chair State Committee for Religious Affairs
3. **His Eminence. John Cardinal Onaiyekan** - Archbishop of Abuja,
4. **His Eminence, Metropolitan Emmanuel** - Vice President, Conference of European Churches, France
5. **D. William F. Vendley**, Secretary General, Religions for Peace -
6. **Mohamed Sameh Amr**, Chairperson of the Executive Board of UNESCO, Ambassador of Egypt to UNESCO
7. **Sheikh Abdallah bin Bayyah**, President, Forum for Peace in Muslim Societies_
8. **Victor Greves**, COEXISTER, France
9. **Rabbi Andrew Baker**, OSCE CiO Special Representative on Combating Anti-Semitism

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Plenary Sessions 3: Dialogue as global trust building

Shaping common global agenda: Responsibility of international institutions and governments in building trust and understanding between cultures and civilizations

Org: Azerbaijan with Partners

Brief: This third plenary focuses on the role and responsibilities of local and national governments, and, importantly international organizations both of government and in the third sector as critical players in the challenge of building trust between people worldwide. It will return to our 3rd Forum theme of 'shared security' and look at the importance of collective engagement by all stakeholders.

The emphasis in the traditional discourse on security of 'war and peace', in which national (often military) security continues to overshadow the more human dimensions on which the Baku Process has placed emphasis, can divert attention away from the challenge for global trust building and for dialogue around shared vulnerabilities and shared insecurities.

Processes of building trust on a global scale and with global reach recognise the real contribution that the acknowledgement of shared and common vulnerabilities have, alongside our shared and common responsibilities to address them.

Key questions: This Plenary will help us to explore a key factor in the approach to building trust between people –trust that can mitigate against continued disagreement and help prevent disagreement from descending into violent conflict and sustaining disharmony. The process of building trust in difficult times and contexts reinforces need to understand both those issues and characteristics that we share and have in common –our *commonalities*, and the need to grow our understanding of the sources of tensions between communities; it seems as important, then to understand each other's insecurities –and governments and international organisations can play a lead role here. To what extent, for example, can and should international organisations with national governments recognize and highlight, challenge and resolve contemporary examples of global vulnerabilities and 'injustices'.

Format: The plenary session will be of 60 minutes in length with experts in the field of religion and conflict providing theoretical and practical perspectives on religion and countering violent extremism. The presentations will be followed with a 30 minutes of moderated questions and answers session.

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Chair: Mahmud Mammadguliyev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Azerbaijan

Moderator: Yahya Pallavicini, Vice Président of COREIS, Milano, Italy

1. **Nathalie GOULET**, Member of Senate, France
2. **Faisal Bin Muaammar**, Secretary General, KAICIID
3. **Antonius Broek**, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative for the Republic of Azerbaijan
4. **Pam Roach**, Vice-President, Washington State Senate, United State of America
5. **Konstantin Shuvalov**, Russian Foreign Minister`s Representative for work with UNOAC, Ambassador at Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Russia
6. **Suljo Mustafić**, Vice-President of the Parliament of Montenegro
7. **Alexis Chahtahtinsky**, Ambassador, project co-ordinator in Baku, OSCE
8. **Pece Gorgiewski**, Global Dialogue Foundation, Australia
9. **Stephen Shashoua**, Director, Three Faiths Forum, UK

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Workshop Session 1

Multiculturalism: Promising Realities

Org: Azerbaijan, Baku International Multiculturalism Centre

One of the most important objectives of the “Baku Process” for the promotion of intercultural dialogue which was initiated by H.E. Mr. Ilham Alyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2008 is to promote understanding, dialogue, and tolerance among peoples belonging to different cultures. Multiculturalism is the most effective responses of a multicultural society toward cultural diversity. It aims at preserving and developing cultural diversity existing in society. The panel will discuss the various aspects of multiculturalism from cultural, political, ethnic, religious, economic, gender and other perspectives both in its theoretical and practical dimensions in light of adaptation to challenges of the contemporary globalized world. The discussants will also exchange their thoughts on interdisciplinary approaches to cultural, ethnic, racial, religious diversities as having promising potentials to offer better solutions to problems arising from contemporary multicultural realities in different countries.

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Chair: **Leyla Aliyeva**- Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Chairperson of the Azerbaijani Youth Organization of Russia

Moderator: **Kamal Abdullayev**- State Counselor on Multinational Multicultural and Religious Affairs

1. **Tahir Salahov**- Vice-President of the Russian Academy of Arts
2. **Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri**- Director General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO)
3. **Koïchiro Matsuura**- Former Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
4. **Rabbi Abraham Cooper**- Associate Dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center
5. **Annette Blum**- International Consultant for Interfaith Affairs of the Simon Wiesenthal Center
6. **Prof. Dr. Tahsin Görgün**- Head of the Department of Philosophy, Istanbul 29 Mayıs University
7. **Barry van Driel**- International Director for Teacher Training and Curriculum Development at the Anne Frank House, Vice-President of the International Association for Intercultural Education, Editor-in-Chief of Intercultural Education

Workshop session 2

Young people as agents of social change: contributors to peace and dialogue processes

Org: UN Alliance of Civilizations⁴

Brief: Today's world population stands over 7.1 billion, where 1.2 billion youth aged 15-25 live predominantly in developing countries and make up for approximately 40% of the worlds' unemployed. While notable progress has been made in recent years, many young people are still denied the investment and opportunities that

⁴ The UNAOC sees youth as key agents of change when it comes to building peaceful and inclusive societies. We understand that if youth participation is enhanced, society as a whole will benefit. We seek to expand the recognition of the work of young people and for them to be included into larger processes to advance the objectives of the UNAOC: to promote cross-cultural understanding and minimize the forces that fuel polarization. We do this in several ways, including by providing youth organizations with opportunities to implement concrete projects in their community, by facilitating networking among youth and with other leaders, by supporting their advocacy efforts, and by strengthening their individual and organizational capacities. Over the years, the UNAOC has built a network of alumni spanning countries in all continents, including countries highly affected by identity based and sectarian tensions and conflicts.

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they require to realize their full potential. Mainstream narratives on young people are too often reductive, negative and fail to represent the diversity of their experience. Lesser known is the capacity of young people to be agents of positive change and engage in peace building: young people are successful social entrepreneurs, leaders in their organizations, role models to their peers and other members of their society. They are active contributors to peace and dialogue by participating in peace building processes, working to counter polarisation and extremism, and can be characterized by the words innovation, commitment, and inspiration.

While efforts are being made by the international community, governments and civil society to advocate for the imperative of further including youth in decision-making, policy making and peace building processes, many gaps remain.

In this context, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations proposes plenary panel on youth as agents of social change – contributors to peace and dialogue processes. The goal is three-fold:

- Contribute a more nuanced narrative on youth and the diversity of their experiences by highlight their contributions, knowledge and understanding;
- Contribute knowledge in areas where evidence of young people's contribution is either scarce or complex (e.g.: countering violent extremism; youth participation in formal peace processes; youth as promoter of intercultural dialogue);
- Stimulate discussion on future action and needs, informing how policy makers, donors, governments and other entities interested in advancing the search for solutions can contribute and support these efforts. Ultimately, the goal is to encourage these to take advantage of the capacity of young people for peace building and social resilience.

Four [TBC] young people from the UNAOC alumni network will discuss their approaches to intercultural dialogue and countering the forces that fuel polarization and extremism.

The proposed session aims to go beyond the standard interaction between speakers and listeners, creating synergies among participants, in order to share thoughts and ideas, to create space for discussion after the session and to generate potential cooperation beyond the session itself.

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Moderator : Mr. Alessandro Girola – UNAOC Project Management Specialist – IIA

1. **Priscilla Brice** , UNAOC – Intercultural Innovation Award Alumni
2. **Johnny Gerges**, UNAOC – Intercultural Innovation Award Alumni, Lebanon
3. **Vasif Eyvazzade**, Head International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, World Forum coordinator, Azerbaijan (*to be confirmed*)
4. **Rama Shyam**, UNAOC – Youth Solidarity Fund Alumni , India
5. **Muhammad Shahzad**, UNAOC- Youth Solidarity Fund Alumni, Pakistan
6. **Ozerdem Alpaslan**, Professor Coventry University, United Kingdom

Workshop session 3

The Silk Roads, Pioneer Routes of Dialogue and Exchanges

“The Silk Roads Initiative and its Potential for today’s Intercultural dialogue”

Org: UNESCO

In today’s context of globalization, which raises more and more mistrust, intolerance, exclusion and tensions, the Silk Roads offer an instructive example of a long-lasting legacy of exchanges, dialogue, cooperation and also confrontations from which we could learn. A better understanding of the rich history and cultural heritage that flourished along the Silk Roads as well as better knowledge of the processes of mutual influences could contribute to the current reflection on intercultural dialogue in modern time. What are the differences between this historical form of globalization and the current one? Why and how the Silk Roads left such a positive memory of beneficial exchanges and dialogue? What lessons could we draw from this historical experience in order to face the challenges of modern globalization?

In order to share ideas on these issues, it is proposed to organize an interactive panel on the UNESCO Silk Roads initiative: past and present.

- Major cultural interactions and common heritage of the Silk Roads.
- Lessons from the Silk Roads and the challenges of intercultural dialogue in current international context

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1. **Doudou Diène**, Vice-President, Scientific Board, International Research Institute on Civilization Policy (IIRPC Edgar Morin), President of the Board of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience
2. **Jacques Legrand**, former president and current professor of the French Institute of Oriental Languages and Cultures 'INALCO'
3. **Shirin Akiner**, Professor of Oriental studies of the Cambridge University
4. **Meruert Abuseitov**, deputy-director of institute of East Conducting in Almaty,
5. **Lu Zhou**, Director of National Heritage Centre, Tsinghua University of Beijing,
6. **Fuad Muradov**, Member of Parliament, Azerbaijan
7. **Penelope Denu**, Executive Secretary, Council of Europe Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes
8. **Reza Deghati**, Philanthropist, idealist, humanist, architect and famous photojournalist, Fellow of the National Geographic Society and Senior Fellow of the Ashoka Foundation
9. **Mehrdad Shabahang**, Programme Officer, UNESCO Silk Roads Online Platform

Workshop session 4

Harnessing Tourism's power as an agent for promoting tolerance, understanding and dialogue between peoples, cultures and civilizations

Org: UNWTO

Brief: With over one billion tourists crossing borders every year, tourism has become a major socio-economic activity of our times that engages people of practically all nations and from every corner of our planet, either as hosts or as guests.

The values of tolerance, understanding and inclusion, treasured by innumerable cultures and civilizations across the globe, lie at the very heart of responsible and sustainable tourism.

A research programme recently launched by UNWTO, jointly with the Government of Austria and the Centre for Peace Research and Education of the University of Klagenfurt, provides, for the first time, a sound knowledge base on Tourism's role in promoting tolerance, understanding and dialogue between different peoples, cultures and civilizations.

The objective of this session is to analyze the conditions under which tourism is able to fully play its role as a transformative agent for dialogue and mutual understanding, which are the building blocks for peace and to recommend effective initiatives, strategies and approaches to this end.

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Moderator: **Amr Abdel-Ghaffar**, Advisor to the UNWTO Secretary-General on Tourism and Peace and UNWTO Regional Director for the Middle East

Speakers:

1. **Nicole Häusler**, Advisor on Sustainable Tourism Development, Myanmar Tourism Federation
2. **Jafar Jafarov**, Rector of Azerbaijan Tourism and Management University
3. **Natalia Naranjo Ramos**, Tourism and Development Advisor, Global Sustainable Tourism Council, Ecuador and Colombia
4. **Rami Isaac**, Senior Lecturer in Tourism, NHTV Breda University, Netherlands
5. **Rina Alluri**, Programme Officer, Business and Peace Programme, Swisspeace
6. **Pranil Kumar Upadhyaya**, Researcher Expert on Codes of Ethics, Nepal
7. **Nada Roudies**, Secretary General, Ministry of Tourism of Morocco
8. **Cordula Wohlmuther**, Programme Coordinator of the Institutional Relations and Resource Mobilization Programme, UNWTO

Workshop 5

Learning to live together through Education: from policy to practice

Org: UNESCO

Brief: In today's increasingly complex and interconnected world, we face both opportunities as well as challenges in promoting peace, sustainable development and global citizenship through education. Global patterns and trends such as increased mobility, environmental degradation, income inequality, as well as social tensions all call for an education that can better prepare students for a more peaceful and equitable world and promote intercultural dialogue. At the same time, the focus of education discourse is increasingly moving away from so called 'hard skills' such as literacy and numeracy, and more towards so called 'soft skills' such as tolerance, empathy, intercultural understanding, and respect for diversity. Indeed, of the four pillars of learning⁵- Learning to Know, Learning to Do, Learning to Live Together and Learning to Be – there is a need today for education to shift its emphasis from knowing and doing towards living together and being. This is all the more relevant within the context of the UN Secretary General's Global Education First Initiative (GEFI), which lists 'Fostering Global Citizenship' as one of its three main priorities.

⁵ The four pillars of learning are outlined in the landmark report, *Learning. The Treasure Within*, by the UNESCO International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century published in 1990.

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Within this context, a multi-country⁶ study published in 2014 by UNESCO Bangkok entitled *Learning to Live Together: Education Policies and Realities in the Asia-Pacific*. It explored how the concept of 'Learning to Live Together' is operationalized in education systems in terms of national policy frameworks, curriculum, pedagogies and assessment. The main findings of this study showed that while countries may define this concept in policy and curricula, it remains unclear how this becomes a reality in the classroom- an implication affecting many countries around the world. Following on from this study, further research on the integration of relevant skills and competencies at school level, as well as the new 'Happy Schools Project'- are working to shed light on how this vision for education can be implemented, in the spirit of intercultural dialogue.

This roundtable will provide an overview of the main findings of UNESCO Bangkok's research as well as that of the Asia-Pacific Centre for Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) and the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP), which are both UNESCO Institutes, as well as highlight the challenges and opportunities for integrating learning to live together through education. In addition, the roundtable will include perspectives from academics and school representatives in order to have a better understanding of how schools and educators can tangibly promote respect for diversity, intercultural understanding through enhanced learner well-being and holistic development.

Moderator: Susan Vize, Regional Advisor for Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO Bangkok (Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education)

1. **Firudin Gurbanov**, Deputy minister of Education, Azerbaijan
2. **Kidong Bae**, Chairperson of the Governing Board, APCEIU
3. **Elaissa Mendoza**, Senior Research Associate SEAMEO INNOTECH
4. **Terje Magnussønn Watterdal**, Country Director, Norwegian Afghanistan Committee
5. **Julian Edwards**, Head of Learning, NIST International School
6. **Aliénor Salmon**, Research Assistant, Education Policy and Reform Unit

⁶ The ten countries that participated in this study include: Afghanistan, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

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Workshop session 6

Partnering with the Community and Religious Leaders for Intercultural Dialogue

Org : UNESCO

Brief: Religion plays a significant and positive role in promoting common intercultural dialogue competences in society. Religious leaders hold the potential of playing a fundamental role in conflict prevention and dialogue promotion. They also give the concept of a *culture of peace and dialogue* the greatest relevance. To this effect collaboration with religious institutions/leaders can have a profound influence to reinforce and promote dialogue among youth. In addition the impact of intercultural dialogue programs can be far-reaching when norms and messages are grounded in the religious beliefs and practices in a community.

Discussion: venues of partnerships, with Muslim religious communities in the Arab states, related to promoting intercultural dialogue among youth. The round table will build on previous work of the UNESCO in partnering with the religious institutions. A draft resource will be presented and discussed. The resource aims at providing essential knowledge for the analysis of the relationship between the role of religion institutions and the promotion of peace and dialogue. It also introduce to the fundamental principles of intercultural dialogue and the culture of dialogue that lie at the heart of UNESCO's mandate. The broad aim of this resource is thus to: a) Raise greater consciousness among religious leaders about the critical role of the religion in promoting intercultural dialogue in the Arab World; and b) Generate among religious leaders greater responsible promotion on issues related to intercultural dialogue, tolerance, diversity, and youth participation.

Moderator: Hegazi Idris, Program Specialist, UNESCO Office in Beirut and Regional Bureau for Education

1. **Ibrahim EL Assiri**, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Centre for National Dialogue
2. **Mohamad Nokari**, Sheikh at Dar Al Iftaa - Lebanon
3. **Suleiman Abdul Moneim**, Alexandria University
4. **Herve Sabourin**, Director, Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie in the Middle East
5. **Selim El Sayegh**, Intercultural Dialogue Expert and University Professor
6. **Chehab Maysoun**, Project Officer, UNESCO Office in Beirut and Regional Bureau for Education
7. **Vasim Mammadaliyev**, Azerbaijani scientist of oriental studies, dean of theology faculty at Baku State University, chairman of a cathedra of Arabic philology and full member of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences

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Workshop session 7

Youth: Responsible and Constructive Use of Social Media

Org: UN Alliance of Civilizations

Brief: The internet and social networking sites can be a very powerful tool and can be used in a very positive and rewarding way. However, it can also be open to misuse and abuse. Defamatory messages, inciting language as well as hate speech are easily disseminated and accessed via social media platforms. They are helping not only the cultivation of cultural and religious stereotypes throughout society, but also encourage the radicalization of individuals provoking intense social polarizations that often contribute to violence. Youth, as much as they are the most active users of social media, they are equally the most likely recipients of negative social media. Inspiring youth towards the responsible and constructive use of social media is a fundamental aspect that needs to be addressed.

Key Questions: How should society address these phenomena? How should we discuss them within the framework of freedom of expression? The outcome of this session would be a recommendation that would highlight the need for an open and transparent discussion on youth and freedom of expression in the age of social media.

1. **Ed Maklouf** , Expert in Citizen Journalism (UK),
2. **Hans Shakur**, Hi-tech Expert, Israel
3. **Maged El Samny** – Egypt Foundation for Youth & Development – Egypt
4. **Azer Khalilov**, Director General, Caspian International Broadcasting Company

Workshop session 8

Engaging youth in intercultural dialogue and respect for diversity

Org: UNESCO

Brief: The crucial role of young women and men in advancing intercultural dialogue and understanding needs to be increasingly recognized within the global development agenda. Recent events in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, as well as in other regions of the world, clearly demonstrates that today's large youth

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population, driven by a need for change, can shape social, economic, political and cultural life.

The current economic crisis, as well as increases in migration, is changing the discourses on identity and integration, affecting in particular young people, with new forms of threats to peace. As such, youth are more than ever exposed to this reality, exacerbated by the new information technologies, the Internet and social media as a whole. The misuse of cyberspace has a dramatic impact on the globalization process and changes the conditions for building lasting peace, and important issue to address in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

Based on UNESCO Youth strategy and current work of the Organization with its partners regarding growing threats to freedom of expression and respect for cultural and religious diversity, the objective of this workshop will be to reflect on the ethical, social and political issues related to the use of social media and digital platforms, including the role they can play in promoting intercultural dialogue, tolerance and respect for diversity, with a focus on the role of youth.

Developments in latest UNESCO work in this domain will be discussed during this round table, including the sharing of preliminary results of inquiries initiated on youth involvement in social media. The goal is to initiate a discussion on the risks and opportunities of social media for promoting intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace and through that, its contribution as an enabler for the increased involvement of youth in decision making processes and democratic participation.

Discussions during this session will focus on key findings of a new regional study on youth online engagement. This study is carried within the framework of the NET-MED Youth Project, a three-year initiative (2014-2017) which aims to favour an enabling environment for young women and men through the development of their competences, to exercise of their rights and active citizenship, particularly in decision-making processes. The networking capacities of youth organizations in the concerned countries of the Mediterranean region will be strengthened, notably by increasing their interaction with the media and their use of ICT-based platforms.

In cooperation with the research centre CELAT/University Laval (Canada), UNESCO has launched an in-depth evaluation of the existing youth web platforms in the Arab region. These results will advance the understanding of youth online engagement and mobilization and will provide recommendations for the design of a new regional web platform connecting youth and opening spaces for focused exchanges and debates across the region. The presentation proposed for this Forum will highlight some exemplary web platforms that have been examined (benchmarking). Youth organizations that are members of NET-MED Youth will share their perspectives and experiences on the issues of intercultural dialogue, respect for diversity and fight against online hate speech, in the context of the Southern Mediterranean Region, with a discussion open to other contexts and realities.

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Moderator: Amina Hamshari, UNESCO, Social and Human Sciences Sector, Intercultural Dialogue Section

1. **Salma Negra**, UNESCO Rabat Office National Coordinator, UNESCO/European Union “Networks of Mediterranean Youth” (NET-MED Youth)
2. **Nour Kaabi**, Coordinatrice de la Plateforme Jamaity
3. **Nagla Abed**, Coordinatrice à la Fondation Anna Lindh, Alexandrie
4. **Lawrence Ndambuki Muli**, Président et coordinateur régional du Réseau des jeunes de Libreville pour la Culture de la Paix
5. **Edouard Delrue**, Professeur de Philosophie politique - Université de Liège
6. **Marco Perolini**, chargé politique pour l'égalité et les droits humains, Forum Européen pour la Jeunesse

Workshop session 9

Competences for Democratic Culture

Org: Council of Europe

The aim of this workshop would be to present the background to and state of play of the work being done to develop a framework for Competences for Democratic Culture and engage the participants in a debate and group work to obtain feedback on the usefulness of the model of competences for the participants' education processes.

Workshop session 10

Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility, and by European Youth Card Association

As regards the Partial Agreement's on Youth Mobility contribution, it'll fit in part 3, WG3 (D) “Dialogue as Young People” and will address some questions mentioned in the Azerbaijan's working document at the bottom of page 7. We propose a workshop on **"The use of Youth Card as a tool to Promote Intercultural Understanding"**.

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Workshop session 11

Youth Participation: the role of Global Education and intercultural competences

Org: Council of Europe North South-Center

The workshop will be organised based on the links between global education (GE), the development of intercultural competences and youth empowerment and participation.

The session will include the contribution of experienced youth trainers and activists, who have collaborated in previous training courses organised by the Centre.

The main objectives are:

- To share the GE approach as tool to promote the development of intercultural competences with young people;
- To allow participants to experience the GE approach and have an understanding of its added value, especially with youth groups;
- To develop a common understanding on what intercultural competences are and the link with GE;
- To reflect on the role of intercultural competences for youth empowerment and participation;

To share good practices promoted by young people and youth organisations that link global education, intercultural dialogue and youth participation.

Chair: Jean-Marie Heydt , Chair of the Executive Committee of the North-South Center of the Council of Europe

Moderator: Niall Sheerin, Deputy Director, North-South Center of the Council of Europe

1. **Farhad Hajiyev**, President of the Azerbaijan Youth Foundation (*to be confirmed*)
2. **Andreia Henriques**, Youth Cooperation Programme Manager, North-South Center of the Council of Europe
3. **Carmen Fischer**, NSC Global Education and Youth trainer
4. **Lawrence Mulli** , NSC Global Education and Youth trainer
5. **Malek Ben Ammar**, NSC Global Education and Youth trainer

Workshop session 12

The role art and heritage in cross-cultural relations

Org: Azerbaijan

There are two current contextual difficulties. One is the rise of various kinds of authoritarian populism around the world, as a counter-tendency to globalisation, often resulting in nationalistic and pietistic movements that leave no room for intercultural dialogue. For many of these movements, civil society is not considered autonomous, and intercultural dialogue is viewed as a threat rather than a source of enrichment. The second is the global economic crisis, which in certain countries is fostering a sense of insecurity inimical to intercultural dialogue, or subjecting the cultural and heritage sectors to retrenchment and greater dependence on support from earned revenues or sponsorship from private companies and individuals for whom intercultural dialogue may not be a priority.

These and other challenges may need to be addressed by all concerned. Governments, international organisations, directors of cultural institutions, cultural NGOs, networks, managers and artists may find themselves facing into a difficult headwind in the coming years. What new strategies should be adopted? Which experience can we learn from? How might culture, the arts and heritage have a greater impact in promoting intercultural dialogue locally, regionally and especially globally?

Chair: Sevda Mammadaliyeva, Deputy minister of culture and Tourism, Azerbaijan
(to be confirmed)

Mod: David Lordkipanidze, General Director of Georgian National Museum, Georgia

1. **Dusen Kaseinov**, Secretary General of TURKSOY
2. **Halit Eren**, Director General, IRCICA - Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture
3. **Peter Mousaferiadis**, Cultural Infusion, Australia
4. **Kishor Kumar Tripathy**, Editor, Cultural Informatics Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Ministry of Culture, Government of India
5. **Dragana Filipovic**, Ambassador, Head of the Council of Europe office in Baku
6. **Carlotta Del Bianco**, Vice President of the Del Bianco Foundation
7. **Katerina Stenou**, Former member of the WFID Task Force
8. **Teodoro Valente**, Vice Rector for Research and Innovation, La Sapienza University, Italy
9. **Diana C. Altman**, Executive Director of Karabakh Foundation

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Side Events

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

1st roundtable

"Culture and sustainable development in the post-2015 development agenda"
Org; Azerbaijan

Chair: Abulfas Garayev, Minister of Culture and Tourism, Azerbaijan

Note: Ministers, Heads of Delegations and representatives of the Ministries responsible for culture and tourism are invited to participate at the ministerial roundtable

Academic Forum of UNESCO Chairs on Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue

Org: Azerbaijan, UNESCO, KAICIID

Brief: The event is organized by UNESCO, KAICIID and the Government of Azerbaijan with a view to promoting mutual understanding and peace in the framework of the 3rd World Forum on International Dialogue and will take place from 19-20 May 2015.

Today, globalization and rapid social transformations bring new opportunities, but also pressing challenges which call for a better articulation between cultural diversity, local cultures and universal values. This is particularly evident in an international context marked by a raise of intolerant behaviours, radicalization, extremism and conflicts, often fuelled by the manipulation of cultural and religious identities or beliefs.

More than ever before, we need to reaffirm the importance of intercultural dialogue, including interreligious dialogue, with a view to bring humanity closer together as one. This goes at the foundation of UNESCO's mandate to build peace in the mind of men and women, particularly important this year of the 70th anniversary of the Organization.

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In this context, the relevance to the WFID and of the Baku Process as a whole could not be overemphasized, as it offers a platform to enhance the academic debate, while nurturing new arguments for policy-making actions for a truer dialogue to take place in our multicultural societies.

As think tanks and as bridge builders between academia, civil society, local communities, research and policy-making, UNESCO/UNITWIN Chairs specialized in the field of intercultural and interreligious dialogue have a central contribution to make, building on their practical experience from different regions of the world to address these issues. The discussion will also contribute to the implementation of the Action Plan for the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022), for which UNESCO is the lead agency for the United Nations system, and provide in this regard seminal knowledge on intercultural and interreligious dialogue and the sharing of inputs about main challenges to connect academia with policy-making, while designing concrete steps forward for nurturing a roadmap for this Decade.

Key discussion will include:

- *“World Religions in the Context of Contemporary Culture: New Perspectives of Dialogue and Mutual Understanding”*
 - *“The Challenges of Social Transformations and Intercultural Dialogue for Policy Response to our Plural Societies”*
 - *Working Session of the UNESCO/UNITWIN Network: Discussion of a joint action plan for 2016-2017*
- Representative from the Government of Azerbaijan

Opening:

1. **Nada Al-Nashif**, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO
2. **Gunay Efendiyeva**, Secretary General of the National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO
3. **Prof. Steven Shankman**, UNITWIN Network Coordinator, Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair for Transcultural Studies, Interreligious Dialogue, and Peace at the University of Oregon
4. **Prof. Patrice Brodeur**, Director of Research, KAICIID Dialogue Center

Thematic discussion 1: “World Religions in the Context of Contemporary Culture: New Perspectives of Dialogue and Mutual Understanding”

Co-moderators: **Prof. Basilius Jacobus Groen**, Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair for Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue in South-Eastern Europe at the

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University of Graz, Austria & **Prof. Liubava Moreva**, Programme Specialist for Culture, UNESCO Moscow Office

Key speakers:

1. **Prof. Steven Shankman**, Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair for Transcultural Studies, Interreligious Dialogue, and Peace at the University of Oregon, USA
2. **Prof. Priyankar Upadhyaya**, Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair for Peace and Intercultural Understanding at the Banaras Hindu University, India
3. **Prof. Hassan Nadhem**, Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair on the Development of Inter-Religious Dialogue Studies in the Islamic World, the University of Kufa, Iraq

Thematic discussion 2: “The Challenges of Intercultural Dialogue for Formulating Policy Responses in our Plural Societies”

Co-moderators: **Prof. Paul Morris**, Chair holder, UNESCO Chair in Inter-Religious Understanding and Relations in New Zealand and the Pacific & **Dr. Selin Şenocak**, Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Diplomacy, Governance and Education, Director, Occidental Studies Applied Research Center Political Sciences and International Relations Faculty Member, Istanbul Aydın University, Turkey

Key speakers:

1. **Prof. Gary Bouma**, Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair in Interreligious and Intercultural Relations – Asia Pacific, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia
2. **Prof. Melloni Alberto**, Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair in Religious Pluralism and Peace at the Bologna University, John XXIII Foundation for the Religious Studies
3. **Prof. Roger Koussetogue Koude**, UNESCO Chair for Memory, Cultures and Interculturality (791) Vice-Dean, Faculty of Law, Catholic University of Lyon

Working Session of the UNESCO/UNITWIN Network: Discussion of a Joint Action Plan for 2016-2017

Co-moderators: **Prof. Steven Shankman**, UNITWIN Network Coordinator, Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair for Transcultural Studies, Interreligious Dialogue, and Peace, University of Oregon, USA & **Prof. Dimitri Spivak**, Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair for Comparative Studies of Spiritual Traditions, their Specific Cultures, and Interreligious Dialogue, the North-Western Affiliation of the Russian Institute for Cultural and Natural Heritage named after D.S. Likhachev, St. Petersburg, the Russian Federation.

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Introduction:

1. **Prof. Steven Shankman**, UNITWIN Network Coordinator.
2. **Hugue Ngandeu Ngatta**, UNESCO, Social and Human Sciences Sector, Focal Point for UNESCO Chairs on intercultural dialogue.
3. **Rosa Guerreiro**, international expert in intercultural and interreligious dialogue, remarks on the mission of the UNESCO Chairs networking.

Book launch: “Agree to Differ” -a landmark publication on the international decade of the rapprochement of cultures, by UNESCO and Tudor Rose

Agree to Differ is a publication that aims to amplify the international dialogue being conducted during the early years of International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013–2022). It is to engage governmental and international organizations as well as institutional and professional interests in displaying the extent and variety of their efforts to make the world a better place.

Agree to differ will be a fully illustrated 200-page glossy publication with over 60 invited authors relating their work in active efforts to encourage rapprochement of cultures at international, regional, national, and local levels of activity. Their commentaries will draw upon experiences around the world, showcasing why cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and responsive democratic governance are vital for the development and peace, especially in time of global crisis.

Agree to Differ will reflect the progress and challenges in this essential topic, highlighting good practices in a wide variety of societies and disciplines. By focusing on the experiences and livelihoods of people, especially those in vulnerable human habitats, the book will strive to project the benefits of experience into future actions and institutional commitments to better understanding and effective cultural rapprochement in achieving future sustainable development.

The book will be launched at a high-level side event, with UNESCO DG and official authorities from contributing countries being present.

Tentative list of participants:

1. Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General
2. High level representative from Kazakhstan
3. High level representative from Azerbaijan

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002315/231544E.pdf>