

UNAOC Group of Friends Meeting on Interreligious and Intercultural dialogue  
process as a tool for Preventing conflict and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding

*19 April 2017*

Your Excellencies, Secretary General Al-Nasser, Under Secretary-General Kang, and Assistant Secretary General Fernandez-Taranco,

Thank you for convening the meeting on this very topical and timely issue. The four pillars of activity of the Alliance: Youth, Education, Media, and Migration, are crucial in the work of preventing conflict based on religious and cultural tensions. I take this opportunity to reiterate Hungary's strong commitment and support to the work of the AoC.

We are of the firm view that peace and security development and human rights are intrinsically interlinked; therefore, Hungary strongly supports the initiatives aiming at enhancing the coherence of activities of the UN under its main pillars. In this regard, we are particularly encouraged by the reform commitments and dedication of the Secretary-General to make the UN fit for such a challenge.

Strongly supporting the reinvigorated efforts of the new UN leadership in this field, we are firmly committed to the role of preventive diplomacy, mediation and „putting peace first” in today's complex security contexts. In this regard, Hungary is prepared to provide financial and expert assistance to the endeavors of the Secretary-General. Understanding the crucial role the UN Department of Political Affairs is playing in the fields of conflict prevention and mediation, Hungary has decided to become a member of the small group of donor countries in support of DPA's important work. Hungary has been making voluntary contributions of \$50.000 in two consecutive years.

The international community has been investing intensively into conflict management and peacekeeping, which in many instances contributes significantly to the efforts aimed at stabilization. But this approach can also easily result in the maintenance of the status quo rather than the elimination of the drivers and root causes of conflicts. The last years have seen the intensification of devastating conflicts and the increasing inability of the international community to prevent such a trend. To counter this trend and to really put peace first, it is imperative that we prioritize conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy. A genuine political commitment by Member States, stakeholders and the UN system as a whole should bring the enhancement of our collective preventive capacities.

But beyond increasing our investments and intensifying the coherence between UN actions and programs in this regard, we must also divert all the soft diplomacy tools at hand to this direction. In the spirit of dialogue, openness, inclusivity and bridge building, the Permanent Mission of Hungary has long put prevention in the heart of its activities through cultural diplomacy, water diplomacy, sports diplomacy, intercultural and interreligious dialogue and beyond.

I would like to emphasize the role of women in preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention and sustaining peace. There is a wide array of field where women has a key

role to play, through their knowledge and experience, and also their – our – capacity of bridge building, understanding, listening, and creating a real dialogue among the parties, be it in a conflict situation or within the UN.

It is also crucial to go beyond the protection of women and girls in conflict situations, and putting women's meaningful participation and leadership in decision-making processes at all levels to the heart of peacebuilding efforts, throughout the conflict cycle, because sustainable peace can only be achieved with women.

Let me finish by expressing again the strong support of Hungary for the Alliance and for the goals, it aims to achieve. We believe that the Alliance could greatly contribute to the strengthening the activities of the UN on preventive diplomacy.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.