

**REMARKS OF
H.E. MR. NASSIR ABDULAZIZ AL-NASSER
HIGH REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE
UNITED NATIONS ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS**

10th Global Forum on Migration & Development (GFMD) Summit

UNAOC Side Event:

“Fostering Migrant Integration Through Innovative Civil Society Actions”

Federal Foreign Office, Berlin, Germany
Thursday 29 June, 10:50-11:50 a.m.

Director General Linder,

Dear Mr. Bill McAndrews,

Distinguished Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for attending the side event of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations this morning.

I'd like to thank the GFMD co-Chairs, Germany and Morocco, for inviting UNAOC to organize this discussion on “Fostering Migrant Integration Through Innovative Civil Society Actions.” UNAOC has been an observer of the GFMD since 2016, and it has been an extremely productive partnership and cooperation.

I'd also like to express my gratitude to BMW Group and thank Mr. McAndrews for his vision and continuous support of UNAOC, as well as the Government of Canada for their participation and support today.

It is both an honor and a great pleasure to be here, and I look forward to a productive panel discussion.

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Today, we're putting the spotlight on the work of Civil Society. At UNAOC, an important part of our work consists of collaborating with Civil Society groups specialized in the field of media, migration, education, and youth around the world, and empowering them by providing support, training, tools, and other opportunities to allow them to strengthen their actions and their impact.

Today, Civil Society is evolving in dynamic and impactful ways. It is a vibrant and developing space, which is incredibly innovative in its attempts to solve societal challenges. UNAOC is proud of its efforts in strengthening and empowering grass roots organizations as an essential and crucial player across our 4 pillars : Media Migration Youth and Education.

As we know, a national government alone cannot harness all its potentials and realize the Sustainable Development Goals; Civil Society organizations play a critical role in shaping a nation and taking it forward.

Civil Society organizations have the power to influence individual behavior and to help develop the values of respect and tolerance in our modern societies. These values cannot simply be taught; they must also be experienced through practice.

We have outstanding examples on our panel today of such organizations that have cultivated these values in young people and adults through various programs and initiatives.

Those organizations have done excellent and creative work in the domain of migrant and refugee integration. They understand that integration is a dynamic and two-way process that places demands on both the host societies and the individuals concerned. They also know that successful integration benefits immigrants and host communities and that unsuccessful integration, conversely, may lead to marginalization, alienation, as well as xenophobia, discrimination, and incidents of hate speech.

This morning, we'll be showcasing the work of three Civil Society organizations – SINGA, Give Something Back to Berlin, and Welcoming America – that have all received the Intercultural Innovation Award, a joint initiative of UNAOC and BMW Group. Through this partnership, UNAOC and BMW Group join forces to proudly support innovative grassroots projects that encourage intercultural dialogue and cooperation around the globe.

The mission of UNAOC is in line with Sustainable Development Goals 16 of the United Nations' 2030 Development Agenda, which states the need for securing "just, peaceful and inclusive societies." That's precisely one of the goals towards which those three organizations work.

I don't want to take much of your time. I prefer to leave the floor to the actual players.

Thank you.