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Delegation of Morocco

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR OMAR ZNIBER,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF
MOROCCO, AT THE MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

17 June 2010

**In response to the address by the United Nations High Representative for
the Alliance of Civilizations, President Jorge Sampaio**

Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I should like first of all to welcome His Excellency President Jorge Sampaio, the High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, and congratulate him on his commendable work on behalf of dialogue and the rapprochement of cultures.

I should also like to reiterate what I said following the address by the Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference here in the OSCE Permanent Council on 6 May 2010: “the Andalusian era, in which the dialogue of civilizations and the coexistence of religions was a historical fact, unequivocally demonstrates the baselessness of the theory of the clash of civilizations – a theory that we should all reject as an outright deception and an intellectual fraud”.

In our view, this is the essential objective of the Alliance of Civilizations, which is why Morocco is not only a member of the Group of Friends of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations but was also one of the countries that spared no effort to promote the implementation of this proposal by Spain and Turkey which later became a United Nations initiative. Indeed, the Adviser to His Majesty King Mohammed VI Mr. André Azoulay, the current President of the Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures, is one of the ten personalities forming the high-level advisory group that was established in 2005 by the United Nations Secretary-General and drew up a plan of action for the Alliance of Civilizations.

Morocco, as a member of the Group of Friends of the Alliance and as an OSCE Partner for Co-operation, welcomes the fact that this United Nations initiative has gained a new participant since the United States of America joined the Group of Friends; the number of OSCE participating States or Partners for Co-operation that are also part of the Alliance has thus grown.

My delegation takes this opportunity to draw attention once again to the importance of further strengthening co-operation between the OSCE and the Alliance of Civilizations, and reaffirms its desire to contribute towards the institutionalization of such co-operation.

Mr. Chairperson,

With the help of its worldwide network of partners, the Alliance of Civilizations promotes policies and initiatives aimed at improving relations between the different cultural groups. It also works within society at the local level to promote innovative projects that create trust, reconciliation and mutual respect among the various communities. The Alliance thus seeks to strengthen platforms for dialogue among political and religious leaders, the media, civil society and those who are ready to use their influence in favour of dialogue and a rapprochement among cultures.

These factors should be exploited to promote co-operation with the OSCE. As far as the media are concerned, the Alliance has at its disposal a Rapid Response Media Mechanism for use in crisis situations in the sphere of multicultural co-operation, and for the systematic collection and dissemination of information on positive experience of intercultural communication. In this context, my delegation considers that there is a potential for co-operation on joint projects between the Alliance of Civilizations, the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

With regard to education in tolerance, the Alliance of Civilizations is developing material on civic education, tolerance education, ethics education and other forms of education aimed at enabling people to learn to “live together”. The same is true of the ODIHR. In my delegation’s view, there is a potential for co-operation here, to be explored in a context of complementarity, capitalization of synergies and the exchange of good practices.

With a view to the institutionalization of relations between the OSCE and the Alliance of Civilizations, which my delegation strongly advocates, the OSCE could already consider the possibility of initiating co-operation projects with the Alliance of Civilizations in several fields, bearing in mind that, among the four areas of action of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (education, youth, migration and the media), at least three are also priorities for the OSCE (migration, the media and education to promote tolerance and non-discrimination).