

**Joint statement in response to Farah Pandith, U. S. Special Representative to  
Muslim Communities and Hannah Rosenthal,  
U. S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism**

**Permanent Council  
17 February 2011**

On behalf of the Delegations of Spain and Turkey, I would like to welcome Special Representative Pandith and Special Envoy Rosenthal and express our appreciation for their inspiring presentation.

As co-sponsors of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, we welcome the presentation of the new American campaign entitled “2011 hours against hate”, which is fully in line with the overall goal of the Alliance, namely “to improve understanding and cooperative relations among nations and peoples across cultures and religions and, in the process, to help counter the forces that fuel polarization and extremism”.

The Alliance of Civilizations is an essential political platform for intercultural dialogue and an instrument of preventive diplomacy to better manage diversity, open to Governments, International Organizations, civil society and the private business sector. Its four main areas of implementation -youth, education, media and migration- are all very relevant to the work of the OSCE. The Rio Forum further confirmed the global scope of the Alliance of Civilizations and provided partners a platform to connect with each other to launch cooperative projects.

In this regard, we recognize the value of the proposed innovative approach of collecting pledges from people in each country to give volunteer hours to a cause that combats hate in their community. This is the kind of project that the

Alliance supports and promotes; the kind of project that can make a difference in our societies.

We also fully welcome the stress put on the role of youth. Youth have been at the forefront of major social and political advancements and non-violent movements throughout history, as we are currently witnessing. At the same time, as a vulnerable sector of society, youth have been associated with violent extremist groups, especially in environments in need of opportunities. The Alliance has developed a targeted network among groups employing creative methods for preventing extremism and promoting effective dialogue and action among youth. In this sense, the Youth Program of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations recently launched a new website ([UNAOCyouth.org](http://UNAOCyouth.org)), developed by youth for youth, which intends to be a valuable resource for individual youth and youth organizations working towards improving relations among and between communities, cultures and religions

In the framework of the steady progress in the activities of the Alliance of Civilizations, we would like to highlight the relevance of the regional strategies as well as the national plans designed to transform its global objectives into local deliverables. We are pleased that the regional strategies for South Eastern Europe and for the Mediterranean were adopted last year. We believe that they provide new avenues for joint activities between the OSCE and the Alliance of Civilizations.

As High Representative Sampaio stated before the Permanent Council last June, “the Alliance is aimed at creating an inclusive platform for partnerships, action and innovation, bringing together the knowledge, experience and energy of a wide range of partners, all committed to rethinking the way in which we deal with tensions across cultures and to agree on concrete, practical initiatives to promote trust and understanding.”

The OSCE, with its inclusive membership, binding in a common framework different cultures and peoples, could benefit from this platform and contribute to it. We should all work together to further these noble goals.