

Dear Secretary-General,
Dear High Representatives Sampaio and Al-Nasser,
Members of the Group of Friends,
Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first of all express my deep appreciation to HE President Jorge Sampaio when completing his six year's tenure as High Representative of the UN Alliance of Civilizations.

We highly appreciate and acknowledge your commitment and tireless efforts in leading the Alliance through today's challenging times. Under your exemplary leadership, the Alliance of Civilizations has indeed become a well recognized global platform for intercultural dialogue and cooperation, devoted to promoting trust, tolerance and respect among human beings of different beliefs, cultures and languages.

We congratulate HE Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, former President of the General Assembly, for his appointment as the new High Representative and wish him further success when carrying on the outcomes-oriented conflict prevention work of his predecessor.

We have to express our gratitude to our hosts, the Government of Austria for organizing the 5th Global Forum of the Alliance. At a time of global changes when our world is more interdependent than ever, it is indeed of utmost importance that actors become further aware of their shared responsibility when promoting religious freedom, media pluralism and a positive narrative for migration. In this sense, we fully support the outcomes of today's conference and the Vienna Declaration of the Alliance of Civilizations.

Hungary is fully dedicated to the success of the Alliance and shares its result-oriented goals in particular when promoting a common understanding of cultural diversity on a global level. When holding

the presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first six months of 2011, we put special emphasis on these values.

We especially support the cultural diversity approach of minority cultures and languages. Minority rights are necessary because they promote cultural diversity and protect the richness of cultural heritage. We are convinced therefore that intercultural dialogue should respect the equal value of minority cultures and languages. Belonging to a community, based on diversity, equality and participation is a common aspiration shared by all people.

Hungary is aiming to promote intercultural and inter-religious dialogue when fostering cultural heritage projects. In the coming weeks we join the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes program, a cross-border cultural co-operation offering a unique cultural experience - bearing in mind that the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes is now open to non-European Council states as well.

Hungary intends to put special emphasis among its foreign policy goals on a global openness towards Asia, Africa and Latin-America. Very successful Asian and Latin-American conferences have been organized in our foreign ministry and we are looking forward to a forum dealing with Africa in the coming weeks. In this framework, we develop foreign and economic policy cooperation programs with a strong inter-cultural dimension. This year for instance, we commemorate a famous Hungarian traveler and scientist of the 19th century (Ármin Vámbéry) – travelling through Turkey to Asia when searching Hungarian language roots. We would like to value his inter-cultural and inter-religious scientific legacy - of the time - in today's diplomatic and economic relations.

When concluding, dear High Representative, let me reiterate Hungary's full commitment to and appreciation of the goals and results of the Alliance of Civilizations, a precious tool in our hands for the benefit of the one and only human civilization. We very much look forward to the Vienna Forum and its successful outcome.

Thank you for your attention.