



### **UNAOC Fellowship Alumni Event:**

*“The role of media and civil society in fostering peace”*

Organized by UNAOC and the Permanent Mission of Germany to the UN

#### CONCEPT NOTE

#### **The Fellowship Programme**

The UNAOC Fellowship is an intercultural exchange programme between young professionals and civil society leaders from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA region), and Europe and North America (EUNA region). For a duration of two weeks, each group travels to its counterpart’s region where they meet with government representatives, international organizations, religious leaders and a wide range of journalists, NGOs, think-tanks and civil society actors. The Fellowship aims at fostering dialogue and understanding between peoples of different faiths and cultures.

Since 2015, the Fellowship programme also focuses on a specific theme that guides discussions and activities during the trip, but also the selection process of participants. The focus of the 2017 edition of the UNAOC Fellowship Programme was “The role of media and civil society in combating hatred and fostering inclusion” and 2017 Fellows were selected for their professional achievements as journalists or civil society workers.

The UNAOC Fellowship Programme is made possible thanks to the financial contribution of the Federal Foreign Office of Germany. UNAOC also thanks the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Morocco, the League of Arab States, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, and the Qatar Committee for the Alliance of Civilizations for their support.

#### **The Fellowship Alumni Network**

After completing their Fellowship, participants join the UNAOC Fellowship Alumni Network, a global pool of 200+ young experts and civil society leaders from 45 countries. UNAOC Fellowship Alumni are professionally involved in a wide spectrum of activities.

In the current global context, international institutions have expressed their need to work with grassroots networks and local actors to counter radicalization, fight xenophobia, and foster intercultural understanding across the world. UNAOC Fellowship Alumni, both in their capacity of civil society leaders and as members of the UNAOC Alumni Network, work together on using their resources and expertise to foster intercultural dialogue and to participate in the global effort to promote tolerance and inclusion.

### **Objective of the Event**

1. Sixteen Fellowship Alumni from Europe, North America, the Middle East, and North Africa will present their recommendations on the role of media and civil society in fostering peace.
2. Alumni will present recommendations framed by key UN documents such as the UNSG Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (2015), which recognizes media and civil society as important vectors for the prevention of violent extremism, and the UNSC Resolution 2250 (2015), which acknowledges the crucial role young people should play in advancing global peace and stability.
3. Alumni will also talk about their professional achievements in the fields of media and civil society, and discuss the impact the Fellowship Programme has had on their professional life.
4. Participants to the latest edition of the Fellowship Programme will address the good practices and the lessons learned during their trip to the United States, Germany, France, Spain, Morocco, Egypt and Qatar on the role of media and civil society in fostering inclusion and combatting hatred.
5. Together they will discuss how, both in their capacity of civil society leaders and former participants to the Fellowship Programme, the UNAOC Fellowship Alumni Network can take part in the global effort to combat xenophobia and to achieve sustainable peace.

### **Date and Venue**

Wednesday 6 December from 10:00 to 12:00 at the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations (871 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017). A reception will be held after the event.

### **Outcomes and Visibility**

UNAOC Fellowship Alumni will compile their observations, best practices, and recommendations in a short report that will be shared at the conclusion of the event,