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Statement

H.E. Yusra Khan

**Deputy Permanent Representative
Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations**

At the

**United Nations Alliance of Civilization
Group of Friends Meeting**

New York, 14 February 2013

Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by thanking Ms. Helena Barocco, Adviser to the High Representative, Dr. Jorge Sampaio, for her thorough briefing on the ongoing work of the Alliance, including the final preparations for the 5th UNAOC Global Forum, to be hosted by Austria on 27-28 February 2013.

I wish to take this opportunity to convey my best wishes to Dr. Sampaio and pray for his swift recovery. Indonesia has held his leadership and vision in the highest esteem and appreciation during the past five years. His leadership has galvanized the work of the Alliance, resulting in the increased engagement of stakeholders in the various endeavors and initiatives thus far. Indonesia welcomes the report of the High Representative, as well as the initial draft of a possible Vienna Declaration.

I take this opportunity also, to congratulate the incoming High Representative, H.E. Nassir Abdulaziz al-Nasser, upon his appointment. Based on his leadership and extensive track record and experience, including most recently as the President of the General Assembly for the 66th Session, I am sure that the Alliance will continue to progress in the execution of its goals. Indonesia looks forward to working with the High Representative in support of the priorities he has identified.

With regards to the preliminary views on the prospects of the Alliance for 2013-2014, including a new organizational structure for the UNAOC, we thank the incoming High Representative for this document. We will examine it closely, and offer our comments and suggestions in due course.

Mr. Chairman,

Indonesia has been a firm supporter of the Alliance since its inception. Indonesia's diversity of culture, ethnicities, and beliefs is a legacy of thousand years of acculturation among civilizations. This acculturation was made possible only by the same principles of harmony, tolerance and dialogue that underpin the work of the AoC.

Indonesia has proved that diversity can be the wellspring of progress, not a source of weakness. But we must keep in mind that for the diversity to thrive, tolerance and dialogue must continue be forged.

It is with this conviction that Indonesia has for a long time put high priority on interfaith and intercultural dialogues. We advocate the wisdom of dialogue and its efficacy as a cure for ignorance, prejudice and hatred. This policy has been pursued at the national, bilateral, regional, and global arenas.

Through these dialogues, Indonesia strives to advance respect and mutual understanding, and to contribute to world peace. This is why Indonesia has been very active in the promotion of regional dialogues.

It is to this end that we are one of the initiators of both the Regional Interfaith Dialogue among Southeast Asian and Southwest Pacific Countries, and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Interfaith Dialogue. Both initiatives have become annual events.

Our belief in the efficacy of dialogue as the foundation of peace and mutual understanding buttresses our unalloyed support of the work of the AoC. We will continue to encourage the Alliance to continue to forge partnerships with regional actors so as to advance this important agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

Before I conclude, I wish to take this excellent opportunity to reiterate the readiness of the Indonesian Government to host the AoC's Global Forum in 2014.

This commitment is in line with our efforts to effectively prevent incitement to hostility or violence based on religious or cultural diversity, and to reiterate our contributions to world peace and harmony.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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