Global Dialogue Foundation
Unity in Diversity

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
UNITED NATIONS ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

Bridging cultures, civilizations & ethnicities
towards peace & prosperity

Open Forum: Global Dialogue Foundation gives decisive contribution to launching UNAOC Civil Society chapter in Australia

Picture: APG Foto, Northcote Town Hall, partner meeting

10 October 2011

During a rare visit last week, the United Nations High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, His Excellency Dr. Jorge Sampaio, (former President of Portugal), said that Multiculturalism in Australia developed over many decades should be valued.

At an open forum hosted by Global Dialogue Foundation and several leading peak bodies, the UN High Representative addressed over 130 different cultures, communities, businesses and various civil society organisations. Participants engaged in a conversation on the relevance of grassroots action and ongoing participation in the mission of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, which is to promote cross-cultural understanding and to strengthen civil society organisations across the world.

During his address, the UN High Representative commended the pioneering achievements of Australia as an example the world needs to know about. full speech audio file

Picture: APG Foto, H.E. Dr. Jorge Sampaio

Most of the 180 participants came from multicultural communities throughout Melbourne, Victoria and Australia. The City of Darebin Mayor, Cr. Diana Asmar, addressed the audience which included representatives from: the Australian Federal Police, the Victoria Police, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Victorian Parliament, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, the Department of Education and Early Child Development, the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, the Victorian Multicultural Commission, the Immigration Museum, AFL, Rotary clubs, and diaspora organisations.

Responding to the UN High Representative and introducing audience interaction, Mr. Vasan Srinivasan - President of the Federation of Indian Associations of Victoria, said, "There are different colors, languages, beliefs, faiths. To bring us together, we need many Mahatma Gandhi's. So, you have taken that role, to me as a Gandhi, trying to create the Unity in Diversity. I really appreciate your step. I really appreciate that you have taken the time to come here, to talk with us, to mingle with us, to understand the Australian multicultural society of Melbourne." full speech.

Among the cultures and ethnicities represented were; Australian-Aboriginal, Albanian, Brazilian, Cambodian, Chinese, Croatian, Egyptian, Filipino, Finnish, Greek, Indian, Italian, Jewish, Macedonian, Scottish, Somali, Sri Lankan, Sudanese, Tongan, Turkish... and many others.

Picture: APG Foto, Northcote Town Hall - Open Forum, Strengthening the role of community, NGO's and business in cross-cultural understanding and building inclusive societies

The new logo of Global Dialogue Foundation Unity in Diversity was unveiled. Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Peter (Pece) Gorgievski said, "The organisation was established in close partnership with the UN Alliance of Civilizations to champion 'citizen diplomacy'. A series of programs that promote cross-cultural understanding at the ground-level are now being established under the Alliance's umbrella."

Earlier in the week, Global Dialogue Foundation arranged for Dr. Sampaio to visit the Ecumenical Migration Centre in Fitzroy, Victoria, where newly arrived youth complete their training in employment-seeking skills. This provided a first-hand look at Australian programs that have a long-term approach to multiculturalism.

Picture: Ecumenical Migration Centre, Fitzroy, Victoria

Following the visit, Mr Gorgievski noted, "We are also piloting programs in India and the positive response we receive from communities and non-government organizations both here and in India reinforces for us the real demand for this grassroots movement at a community level.

For additional details, visit http://www.globaldialoguefoundation.org/

Event co-hosting partners: