

## **UNAOC engaging with civil society to work more effectively in promoting dialogue and understanding**



(L-R: Jean-Christophe Bas, Amb. Tariq Ali Al-Ansari, H.E. President Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, Hanifa D. Mezoui, Nihal Saad, Pece Peter Gorgievski)

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One of the outcomes of the [5th Global Forum of the UNAOC](#), which was held in Vienna on the 27-28 February 2013, is a re-energised focus on civil society.

The new UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, H.E. President Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser (Former President of the UN General Assembly), held a conversation with heads of civil society organisations to receive ideas and feedback on fostering stronger interaction with UNAOC.

Responding to President Al-Nasser's direction on civil society, Mr. Pece Peter Gorgievski, Director-General and CEO of the Global Dialogue Foundation, presented information on the launch of the inaugural UNAOC Australian civil society chapter (2011).

Mr. Gorgievski highlighted efforts of an International Task Force to replicate these chapters across the world and establish a 'Global Alliance for Civil Society Organizations' that works alongside or under the umbrella of the UNAOC, as a complimentary citizens assembly.

"A key purpose is to support countries dealing with the challenges of multi-ethnic and multi-faith diversity through civil society grassroots action", affirmed Mr. Gorgievski.

Also presented as an innovative example of a grass-roots community-lead initiative that focuses on intercultural understanding, but also on leadership development and providing organisational governance support, was the recently launched Community Leadership Network Victoria (CLNV) in the City of Whittlesea (Melbourne, Australia).

Being developed under the auspices of local government, the CLNV brings together heads of cultural, ethnic and community organisations each month and provides support so that all groups can strengthen their capacity and contribution to mainstream society. "It's a model for other municipalities and has received financial support from local and state governments, private sector, and is endorsed by a member of the Parliament of Australia". ([www.clnv.org.au](http://www.clnv.org.au))

During the Asia Pacific panel discussion, Mr. Gorgievski focused on strengthening youth engagement and announced the launch of VOICE Magazine - a global magazine of the youth, for the youth and by the youth, as a practical action following the [UNAOC Shanghai Consultation](#), held in November 2012. ([www.voicefortheyouth.com](http://www.voicefortheyouth.com))

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