

## Draft Statement

### “Alliance for Dialogue”

#### WHY

##### *Challenges in international affairs*

The post-Cold War era and unipolarity are over. The rising new world brings a wide variety of values in the forefront of international relations and increases the risks of conflicts and wars. The peaceful shaping of the new world order, growing competition and rivalry, the emerging global challenges to be faced by humanity and addressed by Our Common Agenda<sup>1</sup> necessitate the application of additional, new communication tool between states and other actors seeking to pursue their own values and demands the introduction of additional elements in the multilateral decision-making mechanisms for jointly setting the rules which handle tensions, address emerging challenges and build a safe and free world.

##### *Challenges in societal affairs*

Regardless of social systems, the available toolkits of states and decision-making mechanisms are not sufficient to sustainably manage complex societal transformations, growing polarization, societal developments, inequalities, and effectively handle extreme views, prevent polarization in the societies, address adverse sentiments, ensure long-term peace and understanding between citizens with conflicting values and build up dialogue capabilities within population, including the youth.

The challenges are of growing significance in the era of digitalization that increasingly amplifies polarization and provides space for extreme views, radicalization and hatred.

##### *Lack of Mechanisms and Cooperation*

The challenges could be addressed effectively by translating the culture of dialogue into daily practice. Where there is no dialogue, controversies can get out of hands and can escalate. At present, however, dialogues are conducted randomly, on ad hoc basis at both national and international levels. Development of local capacities, including the training of teachers is

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/assets/pdf/Common\\_Agenda\\_Report\\_English.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/assets/pdf/Common_Agenda_Report_English.pdf)

exceptional. Moreover, the dialogue practitioners act in relative isolation, their community is fragmented. Although dialogue is an instrument for ensuring cohesion, inclusion and prevention it does not constitute an organic part of either the decision-making procedures or the national education. Neither national nor international mechanisms of dialogue are in place. That is particularly relevant in the case of entities who represent controversial values, perspectives, let alone views considered as extreme by the public discourse and mainstream politicians.

## **WHAT**

“Dialogue” often is a specific communication on frequently complex issues which likely generate friction, sometimes even hatred, polarize communities, undermine cohesion and may potentially lead to radicalization and extremism.

“Dialogue” may help to bridge controversies and establish communication links to explore the objective cores of diverse and conflicting identities, views and motivations, the background of adverse sentiments and improve hostile human relations.

“Dialogue” is a process consisting of numerous “dialogue events” which lead to a peaceful environment and co-habitation, and prepare the soil for constructive negotiations to find sustainable solutions of complex problems when the conflict of identities fails to reach consensus.

“Dialogue” does not aim to reach agreements and consensus! “Barely”, it helps build shared society!

Not all polite and peaceful communication is “dialogue”.

There are enormous costs of not pursuing “dialogue”.

## **WHO**

“Dialogue” is conducted between individuals and entities representing diverse, confrontational, occasionally extreme identities, ideologies, values and views. The “dialogue events” are designed and implemented by dialogue facilitators.

## **HOW**

We initiate to establish the “Alliance for Dialogue” with the view to create a driving force aimed at establishing a “culture of dialogue” by setting up decision making mechanisms which incorporate methods of dialogue and pool the dispersed and isolated dialogue activities, capacity building and resources.

*The “Alliance” will:*

- Advocate for and assist in institutionalizing “dialogue” in multilateral diplomacy by introducing dialogue mechanisms in the UN and the concerned international and regional institutions which will support and help prepare decisions touching upon fundamental

values, human rights and cultural particularities. This instrument will operate as the entry hall/back door room of interstate negotiations where experts free of any governmental mandate explore the cores, motivations and backgrounds of controversial views, design shared visions and prepare recommendations for the decisionmakers.

- Advocate for and assist in building up decision making mechanisms at national level which include the institution of “dialogue” to help address complex challenges, manage societal transformations, counter conflictual attitudes and adverse trends, and facilitate building up shared and cohesive societies.
- Advocate for including the culture of dialogue, practicing of “soft skills” (listening to each other, encouraging understanding, respect, appreciation for others etc.) in national curricula of education.
- Establish an international network which will promote the culture of dialogue and dialogic controversy by sharing knowledge, expertise, experience, enhance the interaction between dialogue facilitators and pool the available resources in the field of dialogue.

The “Alliance” will start acting on voluntary basis as an open-end movement composed of individuals and civil organizations dedicated to the culture of dialogue, working with controversies. Over time, pending on the outcomes, political will and resources, the movement would be transformed into a legal entity.

This initiative seeks to contribute to and complement the implementation of “Our Common Agenda” launched by the UN Secretary General, the initiative “Intercultural Dialogue” launched by UNESCO and the concept of “Shared Society” supported by the OECD and Club de Madrid.

## **ROADMAP**

- The core team of the “Alliance” prepares a draft statement to raise awareness of the need for institutionalizing “dialogue” and enhancing its dissemination;
- The statement will be presented during the webinar to be organized as a follow up of the webinar last January (<https://www.genocideprevention.eu/en/events/476-stop-hatred-by-dialogue>) and a reflection period will be launched;  
Mid-July;
- Activists and dialogue practitioners will be invited to support the movement and make inputs;  
September-December
- The finalized statement will be submitted by the core team to the Secretariat of the UN Secretary General;  
January, 2024
- The statement will be presented/sent to the relevant regional organizations;

February, 2024 onwards

- The next steps will be decided on the basis of the outcomes of the steps indicated above in the framework of a webinar.

