

# UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)

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## In news

While discussing resolutions of the UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) on the 'Culture of Peace', India has criticized United Nations for what it called "selectivity" in seeking to protect Abrahamic religions such as Islam, Christianity, and Judaism over others.

## What was India's stand?

India pointed out that previous resolutions of the UNAOC dating back to 2006 had repeatedly decried the hatred against those religions – "Islamophobia, Christianophobia and anti-Semitism" – but didn't condemn attacks on other religious groups including Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists, who have suffered terror strikes and seen their shrines destroyed in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

It also said that the **UN's selectivity under the aegis of the UNAOC**, an organization that was set up in 2005 to prevent polarization between societies and cultures and to bridge differences between them, **only serves to further the theory of an inevitable "clash of civilizations" instead.**

India's remarks were made during a "Culture of Peace" session organized by the UN General Assembly. The UN has organized such sessions each year since 1997.

## About the UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)

- The Alliance aspires to the ideal of a culture of peace and dialogue, based on the conviction that "differences within and between societies be neither feared nor repressed, but cherished as a precious asset of

humanity.”

- The Alliance of Civilizations is a United Nations political initiative of the Secretary-General. It was launched in 2005 by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan, with the co-sponsorship of the Prime Ministers of Spain and Turkey.
- Based on the recommendations of a report by a High-Level Group in November 2006, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed Jorge Sampaio, former President of Portugal, as his High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations.
- The primary mission of the UNAOC is to forge collective political will and to mobilize concerted action aimed at improving cross-cultural understanding and cooperation among countries, peoples and communities.
- It also works to counter forces that fuel polarization and extremism
- The UNAOC is now the premier global platform for intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation. Neither a UN body nor an agency, the Alliance occupies a unique niche within the UN family.